THE TARJUMĀN AL-QUR'ĀN



VOLUME TWO

AL-BAQARAH TO AL-ANFAAL

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad

Edited and renered into English by

Syed Abdul Latif


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The Tarjumān al-Qur'ān

by

MAWLANA ABUL KALAM AZAD

EDITED AND
RENDERED INTO ENGLISH BY

DR. SYED ABDUL LATIF

VOLUME TWO

AL-BAQARAH TO AL-ANFA'ĀL



DR. SYED ABDUL LATIF'S TRUST FOR QURANIC & OTHER CULTURAL STUDIES

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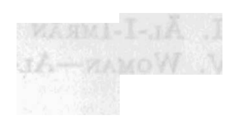
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PREFACE TO THE TRANSLATION

While issuing the present volume of the *Tarjumān al-Qur'ān* in its English rendering covering Chapters II to VIII of the *Qur'ān*, it has been thought desirable to reproduce herein certain extracts from Mawlana Azad's prefaces to the first and second edition of his work, given in full in volume I, which explain the plan he has followed, both original and revised, in his interpretation of the *Qur'ān*.

I express my sincere thanks to Mr. Ali Musa Raza Muhajir, a retired Educational officer of Hyderabad, for having assisted me in the preparation of the matter of this volume for the press, and to Dr. M. Yusufuddin, Head of the Department of Religion and Culture, Osmania University, for preparing its index.

SYED ABDUL LATIF



TRANSLATION OF EXTRACTS FROM PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION OF THE TARJUMĀN AL-QUR'ĀN, 1930.

WHILE taking up this work, *The Tarjumān al-Qur'ān*, for study one may be disposed to know the lines which I have adopted in the presentation therein of the contents and objective of the *Qur'ān*. Indeed, anticipating such a wish on the part of my readers, I had contemplated to state the lines followed in a brief preface to the volume. But when I set out to deal with the subject, I soon realised that it was not possible to do justice to it within the brief compass of a preface. The issues involved were so many and so complicated that a satisfactory discussion of them would have necessitated a detailed survey of a very wide and intricate background. The idea was therefore given up. Instead, I have attempted here to draw just a passing attention to the difficulties or obstacles which usually clog the way of a satisfactory study of the *Qur'ān* so that the reader may incidentally obtain a rough idea of at least the purposes underlying the attempt made here to present the *Qur'ān* to the world of today

As for the exposition of the principles followed in the presentation of the commentary, one will have to await the publication of my *Prolegomena* to the Commentary in the rewriting of which I am at present engaged

For various reasons into which one may not go here, the exact message of the *Qur'ān* has for centuries been steadily kept out of view; so much so, that a very low standard of approach to it has come into vogue. This is noticeable not merely in the approach to the Qur'ānic content but to almost everything connected with it—its language and idiom, its phrase structure, and its style.

In every age, the author of a work is normally the product of his intellectual environment. It is only those who are gifted with vision and insight who form the exception. When we

look back into the history of the commentaries of the *Qur'ān* from the earliest centuries of Islam right up to the close of the last century, we find that the standard of approach to the meaning of the *Qur'ān* had steadily deteriorated. This was the result of a gradual decadence in the quality of the Muslim mind itself. When the commentators found that they could not rise to the heights of the Qur'ānic thought, they strove to bring it down to the level of their own mind.

If we are to see the *Qur'ān* in its true light, it will be necessary for us to lift all those veils which have, from age to age, been laid thereon under the stress of influences alien to the spirit of the *Qur'ān* and then search for the reality about it in its own pages.

Obstacles in the Way of Right Appreciation

These influences are by no means few. They are numerous, and have pervaded every corner of Islamic thought. It is not, therefore, easy to set them out on a brief canvas. I have, however, tried in my *Prolegomena* to the commentary of the *Qur'ān* to sum them up under certain broad heads. The following are the leading aspects which call for consideration:

(1) The *Qur'ān* is not bound by any conventionality in its form of presentation or style or in its manner of address or argument, but follows a way of expression such as is germane to the character of its content or is natural to it. It is this distinctive peculiarity observed by all scriptures which distinguishes them from the conventional forms of literary expression employed in learned discussions.

The first generation of people among whom the *Qur'ān* was delivered were not a sophisticated race. Their mind was not cast in any artificial or conventional mould furnished by civilization. It was content to receive a simple thought in its plain simplicity. That was why the Qur'ānic thought, simple as it was, sank easily into their hearts. No one at the time felt it difficult to catch its meaning. The moment the companions

of the Prophet heard a verse recited to them, they forthwith caught its significance.

But hardly had the first generation of Muslims passed away when the influences of the Roman and Iranian civilizations began to sweep over the new Arab empire. Translations from the Greek literature gave them new literary tastes and initiated them into the art of dialectics. Zest for novelty and inventiveness in approach to everything came to be ever on the increase, with the result that the simplicity of the Qur'ānic manner gradually lost its charm for them. Slowly, step by step, a stage was reached when everything Qur'ānic was attempted to be given an artificial mould. Since the Qur'ānic thought could not fit into any such mould, serious complications in thought arose, with every attempt at resolving them ending in more intricate complications.

Whenever distance is assumed from naturalness, and artificiality resorted to, we are disinclined to look at things in their natural simplicity. We cannot visualize beauty or grandeur in its simplicity. Whenever we choose to endow a thing with splendour, we invariably try to fix it in a network of ornamentation. This is what exactly happened with the *Qur'ān*. The dispositions of the first generation of Muslims were not cast in any conventional or artificial moulds. That was why they instantly caught the meaning of the *Qur'ān*. But the generations which followed would not let the *Qur'ān* present itself in its simplicity. Their love for inventiveness or novelty would not allow this. They began to dress everything in the *Qur'ān* in novel costumes; and since the *Qur'ān* could not fit into such costumes, the effort to force on it things which did not suit it repressed its genius and forced its meaning to assume forms by no means natural to it.

The first period of the Qur'ānic interpretation was that which preceded the codification of Islamic learning. The second began with this codification and has continued, in its different phases, through the succeeding centuries. The second period had hardly opened when the urge to cloak the *Qur'ān* in new garbs took its rise reaching its climax during the heyday of

philosophic speculation among Muslims. That was the time when Imam Fakhruddin Razi wrote his Commentary to invest the Qur'ānic word with an absolutely novel import. Had Imam Razi chosen to represent what exactly the *Qur'ān* stood for, at least two-thirds of what he wrote would have been left unwritten.

Be that as it may, one thing stands out clearly, and it is that to the extent the *Qur'ān* is freed from the unnatural moulds into which it is pressed, to that extent will it disclose its own reality. The difficulties which we feel today in appreciating the manner of presentation observed by the *Qur'ān*, or the arrangement of its parts and verses, or the phraseology employed therein are all due to the inclination inherited from our mediaeval past not to appreciate a simple thing for its simplicity. The *Qur'ān* is so simple to understand and yet we do not feel happy until we evaluate its worth by fanciful standards of our own making, standards so distasteful to the purposes of the *Qur'ān*. That is the picture which today confronts us at every turn.

(2) Whenever we are to know what meaning a particular piece of writing bears, we naturally prefer to accept the meaning given to it by those who have had the opportunity of ascertaining it from one who originally published it. The *Qur'ān*, be it remembered, was delivered piecemeal during the course of 23 years. Whatever portion of it was delivered was wraptly listened to by the companions of the Prophet and was repeatedly recited in their prayers; and whatever clarification they needed of anything therein, they obtained it directly from the Prophet himself. Of these companions, some were distinguished for the firm grasp they had of the Qur'ānic meaning, and this is endorsed by the Prophet himself. It should have been in the fitness of things to have given preference to their interpretation over the interpretation of those who came after them who had not the advantage of close association with the Prophet. It is a matter for regret that those who came after the first generation chiefly inspired by external influences, began to invent for themselves new and newer forms of approach to the *Qur'ān* and caused the original interpretation of it to fall

into disuse. The idea came to be entertained that "the earlie generation was strong in faith, and the later generation wa strong in knowledge," although the earlier generation wa reputed to be sound both in heart and mind, in faith as we as in knowledge. All the same, the real meaning of the *Qur'ā* was gradually relegated to the limbo of oblivion, and its simpl message came to raise, in almost every sphere of life, issues to difficult to solve.

To make matters worse, an unwarranted attitude was assumed which hardened as time went. This led to complications which in their turn necessitated the employment in their support of a variety of methods of argument. And then came into vogue the habit of textual criticism, the writing of foot-notes, and indices. This again gave rise to further complications in the approach to the meaning of the *Qur'ān*. In certain cases, it laid layers above layers of veils over it, one thicker than the other.

To understand the situation, take any passage of the *Qur'ā* for illustration. First, look into the interpretation of it whic the companions of the Prophet and the first generation c Muslims gave to it. Then turn to the commentaries of thos who came after, and compare the two. The earliest commen taries present the Qur'ānic meaning in its natural simplicit whereas the later commentaries gave to it a strange visage b making it the subject of subtle disquisitions.

(3) From the very beginning, stories and anecdotes from th lore of new converts to Islam steadily received currency i Muslim circles. A great body of them were of Jewish origir and exerted a powerful influence on the Muslim mind. Th early commentators avoided to make use of them. But th anecdotes nevertheless succeeded in forcing themselves int the very texture of the commentaries of the *Qur'ān* written afte them.

(4) The traditions of the Prophet were usually employed to clarify the meaning of the *Qur'ān*. But the tendency among the later commentators grew apace to refer not so much to the traditions known to the companions of the Prophet, but to thos

collected indifferently in later times. This created further difficulties in the understanding of the Qur'ānic word.

(5) The sad result of all this was that the manner of presentation adopted by the *Qur'ān* was lost in a maze of far-fetched conceits. The strength of the Qur'ānic meaning lies in the manner of its presentation. It is that which lends clarity to its statements and observations, and makes significant the import of its stories and parables, its appeals and admonitions, and its purposes. Once the significance of this manner was missed, the true picture of the *Qur'ān* was lost to sight. In the words of a poet:

> "That very page was blackened
> Whereon had been noted what was desired."

The manner of argument observed by the Prophets was not to assume logical poses and confuse the hearer. They adopted the natural way of direct appeal, such as might reach every type of mind, and touch every heart. But the commentators, obsessed by the philosophy and logic of Greece could hardly bring themselves to look at reality in its naturalness and appreciate it. They thought that they were honouring their Prophets by turning them into dialecticians. They sought to demonstrate the greatness of the *Qur'ān* by pressing it into the framework of Aristotelian logic, hardly realizing that it was never its primary object. The result was that the beauty and attraction of the Qur'ānic method of argument and of demonstrating its truth was lost in a network of dialectical disquisitions. In fact, the truth had already been lost. The tragedy was that our commentators could not achieve even what they aimed at. They simply let the door wide open to doubt and endless speculation. Imam Razi showed the greatest alacrity and ingenuity in promoting this consummation.

(6) The trouble did not end here. The application of philosophy to the Qur'ānic thought gave rise to numerous dialectical terms, with the result that the simple words of Arabic came to be invested with new connotations. The subject of

the *Qur'ān*, it is obvious, is not the philosophy of the Greeks, nor was the Arabic language at the advent of the *Qur'ān* familiar with its philosophic terms. The words employed in the *Qur'ān* did not originally bear the meaning which was assigned to them in the light of Greek concepts. The transformation led to a variety of speculations; so much so, that words such as *Khulūd*, *Ahdiyat*, *Mithliyat*, *Tafsīl*, *Hujjat*, *Burhān* and *Tāwil* came to bear meanings which the earliest listeners of the *Qur'ān* would never have thought could bear.

(7) As a corollary to this attitude, the idea came to the fore that the *Qur'ān* should support and endorse every new discovery in scientific knowledge. An attempt, therefore, was made to read therein an argument in favour of the Ptolemic system even as the present-day dispensers of intelligence who write commentaries of the *Qur'ān* try to interpret it in terms of every new development in the Science of the Cosmos.

(8) Every book or every system of teaching has something or other for its central theme; so much so that everything pertaining to it revolves round it; and unless this central theme or its primary objective is understood, its significance or anything that is subsidiary to it is not possible properly to comprehend. The *Qur'ān* has certain fundamental objectives to present. Unless these are appreciated in their proper perspective, nothing pertaining to them is possible to catch aright. When under the circumstances explained above, the essential objectives of the *Qur'ān* were missed, it was but inevitable that everything pertaining to them could not be viewed in proper perspective—the statements of the *Qur'ān*, its teaching, its method of argument and of address, and its remarks and observations. Space does not allow citation of illustrations here. Still, to catch a fleeting glimpse of what has been wrought by our commentators, attention may be drawn to but one or two examples. Take verse 160 of chapter 3: "It is not meet for a prophet to act dishonestly," and read the far-fetched commentaries thereon. Take another verse which reproduces the Jewish assertion—"The hand of

Allah is tied up" (5:64). What a rambling, do we not find in the explanations given thereof in utter disregard of the context in which the verse occurs!

(9) A primary condition of proper appreciation of the Qur'ānic meaning is the presence in the commentator of a right taste for literature. But for various reasons this taste steadily grew weaker among our commentators, resulting in inept approaches to the Qur'ānic word or to the idiom and usage of the language in which the *Qur'ān* had been delivered.

(10) The field of interpretation of the Qur'ānic word has always been affected, even as the fields of arts and sciences, by the atmospheric influence of every preceding age. It is no doubt a matter for pride that in the course of Muslim history, scholars possessed of upright character never yielded to political influences or tolerated compromises in the doctrinal beliefs of Islam. But the atmospheric influence of an age does not penetrate through the door of politics alone. In its psychological aspects, it finds for itself many a door to come in. Once such doors are thrown open, they scarcely close thereafter, however much one might try. The doctrinal beliefs might escape contamination, and thanks to our upright scholars they indeed were not seriously touched. But the general character of the minds of men could not remain unaffected.

(11) The period of enquiry and research in Islamic learning came to an end after the close of the 4th century of the Hijra, and thereafter, barring certain exceptions, the tendency to lean on the past for every idea took hold of the mind of the learned. Every one who ever attempted to write a commentary of the *Qur'ān* chose as a matter of course to have before him the work of some predecessor and to follow it

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a moment paused to scrutinize the statement or question it. The result was that gradually few could develop the urge to write fresh commentaries. Every one contented himself thereafter to write only marginal notes to the commentaries already in existence. Read the marginal notes of Baidavi and Jalalain and see what energy was wasted by them to give mere coatings to the walls already raised by others.

(12) The prevailing ineptitude of scholars in the succeeding periods of Muslim history let every form of idiosyncrasy to prosper; so much so, that only those commentaries came into fashion and were read with zest which bore no trace whatever of the touch given to the interpretation of the *Qur'ān* by the earliest band of commentators. The tendency grew universal. It was felt in every sphere of learning. The period of time which could prefer Sakkaki to Jurjani or prefer Taftazani to Sakkaki was indeed a period when only writers of the type of Baidavi and Jalalain could shine.

(13) Take the case of compilations wherein matter was gathered from commentaries already in existence. Wherever a variety of interpretations had been offered by previous commentators, the compiler would invariably choose the feeblest. Not that his eyes did not rest on appropriate or valid interpretations; but with a view to pandering to the prevailing taste, he would deliberately overlook them.

(14) To make matters worse, the type of commentary known as "Tafsir-bir-rai" or commentary which lets the text subserve one's own personal opinion on any subject, came now freely to be written—a form of commentary strongly discountenanced by the companions of the Prophet. Not that reason and insight were tabooed in *Islam*. Were it so, all study of the Qur'ānic thought would seem futile; for the *Qur'ān* openly invites its readers to exercise reason in their approach to it, and ponder on what it states. At every corner of its presentation, it exclaims:

> "Do they meditate on the *Qur'ān*?
> Or, are there locks on their minds?" (Q:47:24)

"Tafsir-bir-rai" is that form of commentary which does not aim to represent what the *Qur'ān* actually states. On the other hand, the commentator has some view to advance and he presses the Qur'ānic text to lend support to it.

This style of commentary came into vogue in the days when every doctrinal belief of Islam came to be seriously examined and a number of schools of theology took their rise, each intent on exploiting the *Qur'ān* to uphold its own point of view. Commentaries written with this purpose are styled "Tafsir-bir-rai".

Further, when zealous followers of the different juristic schools among Muslims developed the passion for sectarianism, the verses of the *Qur'ān* were exploited to uphold, by hook or by crook, their own particular schismatic obsessions. Few cared to be guided by the plain meaning of the plain word of the *Qur'ān*, or by the clear purposes underlying the Qur'ānic method of presentation of its contents, or by straight-forward reason. Every one attempted to force the Qur'ānic meaning to conform to the views sponsored by the Imam or founder of his own schismatic school of thought.

To create further complications, certain sections of the Sufi school of thought in their search for the hidden meaning of the *Qur'ān*, went so far as to press everything Qur'ānic into the moulds of their own formulas. Thus every Qur'ānic injunction and every basic belief came to bear some sort of esoteric connotation. This form of approach is also "Tafsir-bir-rai".

Or take another instance of this "Tafsir-bir-rai". Attempts were made during the period under reference to give the Qur'ānic method of argument the garb of Greek logic. In fact, whenever any reference was made to the sky, or the constellary order, attempt was made to square it with the Greek system of astronomy.

Or take the latest examples of interpretation attempted by a certain type of commentators both in India and Egypt in the name of reorientation of the Qur'ānic thought. Attempt is made to invoke the *Qur'ān* to lend its support to the achievements of modern research in the different spheres of scientific

thought, as if the *Qur'ān* was delivered over 1,300 years ago just to endorse in advance, in the form of riddles, what centuries after, men like Copernicus, Newton, Darwin, H. G. Wells, could find out for themselves without the aid of any revealed scripture—riddles reserved to be noticed and unravelled only by the present-day Muslim commentators of the *Qur'ān*. Such commentaries are also to be classed as "Tafsir-bir-rai".

Such in brief is the story of the Qur'ānic interpretation attempted in the past. But however brief this survey, it is enough to show what obstacles one has to overcome to reach the *Qur'ān*, or what thick veils to lift to catch a clear vision of it. The effort will involve a simultaneous survey of every nook and corner of the *Qur'ān* and the exercise of deep insight into the meaning of things. It is only then that the forsaken reality of the *Qur'ān* may put in its appearance. I have tried to the best of my ability to negotiate with these obstacles. I cannot say to what extent I have succeeded in my attempt. But I may say this with confidence that I have opened a new avenue for an intelligent approach to the *Qur'ān*, and hope that men of understanding will notice that the method adopted by me is something fundamentally different from the method pursued in the past.

Three distinct needs call for attention in connection with the study of the *Qur'ān*. These have been attended to severally in *Muqaddam-i-Tafsir*, *Tafsir-al-Bayān* and *The Tarjumān al-Qur'ān*. The first presents the objects or purposes of the *Qur'ān* and discusses the principles underlying them and enunciates the leading ideas advanced by the *Qur'ān*. The second is meant for a detailed study of the *Qur'ān*, and the *last* aims to present what is universal in the Qur'ānic teaching.

The last of the series is published first for the reason that in its purposes, it can claim priority of importance, and in fact, it forms the basis on which the other two works rest. In the preparation of this work, the object kept in view is to present not a detailed commentary on the traditional lines, but to give out all that is essential to an easy grasp of the Qur'ānic meaning. The method of presentation adopted for this purpose,

I venture to hope, may be favoured by the thoughtful among us. The aim is to furnish a self-explanatory translation of the *Qur'ān* in Urdu, explicit enough to convey the sense of the original in full, supported here and there, by appropriate foot-notes. These foot-notes offer comments on the textual content, furnish details for the Qur'ānic generalisations, disclose the various purposes underlying them, furnish argument or evidence in their support, introduce coherence and order in the different Qur'ānic injunctions, and clarify the meaning of the Qur'ānic text with the utmost brevity. In short, they serve as a beacon light to the thoughtful— "a light gleaming before them and on their right hand"—to use the Qur'ānic phraseology (Q:57:12), a light that keeps the reader company and does not desert him.

The arrangement of notes was no less an easy task than the translation of the original text. One could not give to them more than a limited space; but the need was always there to let them be as fully comprehensive in their scope as possible. Care was therefore taken to see that they betrayed no lacunae. The utmost brevity has had to be resorted to in their composition; but it may be made clear that every word of these notes is suggestive in import, and opens out vast vistas of possible elaboration.

District Jail, Meerut
16 *November*, 1930.

ABUL KALAM

TRANSLATION OF PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION, 1945

THE helplessness of man is noticeable in the fact that the plans he lays out scarcely attain perfection. Today he starts a piece of work and feels that he has done all that was necessary. When the next day dawns and he reviews what was done by him the day before, he realizes that the work that he had thought was done well begins to disclose shortcomings. Every writer who has had the occasion to revise his own writings, will endorse the truth of the statement that I have just made.

When I looked into the first edition of *The Tarjumān al-Qur'ān* after the lapse of several years, I felt just this experience. The result was that I had to revise the entire matter both of the translation and the commentary which have now put on a new bearing altogether.

The following are the alterations that need special mention:

(1) Fresh items of interest have been incorporated into the text of the commentary of the *Surat-ul-Fatiha* which had previously been overlooked. The bulk of the volume has consequently been enlarged. The enlargement is particularly due to a further elucidation of the issues arising out of the subject of the "Concept of God".

The attributes of God have always formed a very delicate and complicated subject to handle. It touches the frontiers of metaphysics on the one hand, and of religion on the other, since both have an equal interest therein. Philosophers more than religious divines have taken a keen interest in it. The philosophic speculations of early times, particularly in India, Greece, and Alexandria, and of the middle ages have given rise to a large body of literature on the subject. When Muslim scholars turned their attention to the question of divine unity, and began to indulge in dialectics, they fought among themselves over the issues raised in consequence and opened the way to a variety of divergent schools of religious thought among

themselves. The historic conflict between the Traditionists (*Ashab-ul-Hadith*) and Free Thinkers (*Āshā'irā*) may be cited as but an instance.

This was one of the questions which for long perplexed me in my student days. When the truth dawned on me ultimately, I realized that the way of the dialectician took one nowhere. The more I pursued it, the more distant did I find myself from the truth. It was only after a very serious and painful reflection that I realized that the way to mental satisfaction was the way marked out by the *Qur'ān* itself, the way followed tacitly by the first generation of interpreters of the *Qur'ān*. It is this method which I have followed in my approach to it.

> "The more I dashed my hands and feet against the waves,
> The more woefully perplexed did I feel.
> But when I ceased to struggle and lay motionless,
> The waves, of their own free will, drifted me across to the shore."

The subject of the "Concept of God" seemed to me hedged in an intricate network of dialectic disquisitions and philosophic terminology, and I felt that it should be rescued. This I have attempted; and I feel that even those who are not conversant with the phraseology of Islamic learning will be able to follow my line of thought without difficulty. Wherever necessary, I have given English equivalents to such Arabic terms of philosophy and dialectics as had necessarily to be used in the course of my discussion, so that those whose education has been conducted on modern lines may easily follow what has been stated on the subject.

(2) In the course of the discussion on the "Concept of God" I had, in the first edition, incidentally to refer to the views held on the subject by the followers of other faiths. The reference was but cursory. But after its publication, it was realized that this needed some elaboration. The matter has therefore been entirely recast for this edition and set in appropriate detail.

(3) In the first edition, I was content to distribute the

matter of the volume only under certain leading heads. In the second edition, however, I have supplied sub-headings as well to enable the reader to catch at a glance the scope of the matter covered under each main head.

(4) The entire matter of the translation has been revised so as to set in clearer perspective the meaning of the original and this, as far as possible in utmost conformity to the diction of the Arabic text. Those who have had the opportunity of reading the matter of the first edition will not miss to notice that every second or third line in every paragraph has, in one form or another, been modified.

(5) The explanatory notes attached to the translation have in most cases been enlarged.

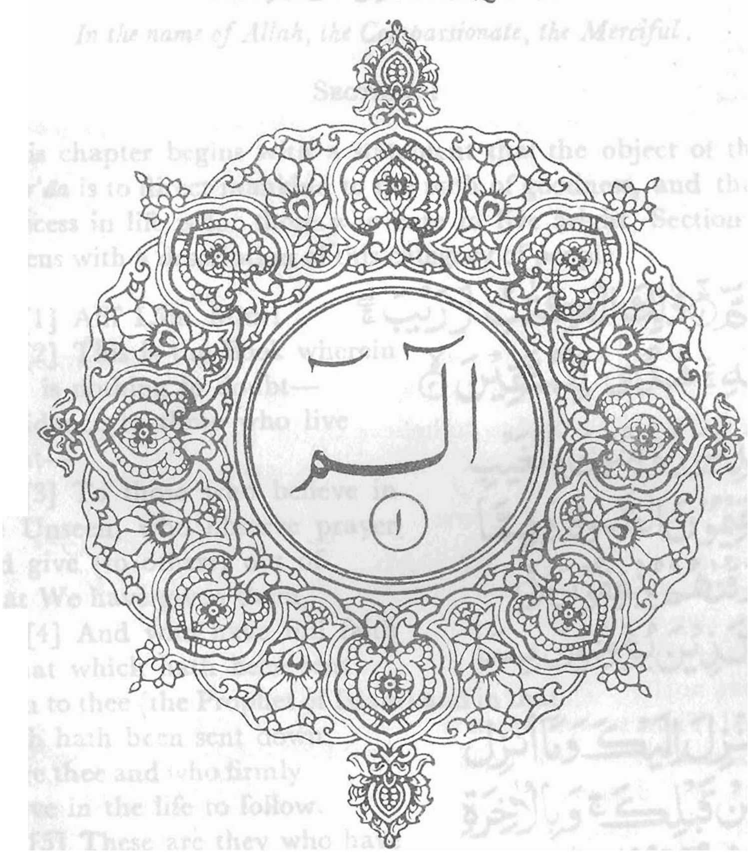
On the whole, the present edition is, in view of its special new features, so different from the previous edition that, I dare say, those who have read the earlier edition will by no means feel indifferent to it.

Ahmadnagar Fort Jail
7 February, 1945 .

ABUL KALAM

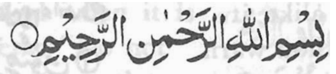
Chapter II

THE COW—AL-BAQARAH



CHAPTER II

THE COW—AL-BAQARAH—REVEALED AT MADINA



In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

SECTION 1

This chapter begins with a statement that the object of the *Qur'ān* is to direct mankind to the path of goodness, and that success in life is for those who care to live aright. Section I opens with a description of this category of people.

الٓمّٓ ۝١ ذٰلِكَ الْكِتٰبُ لَا رَيْبَ ۛۚ فِيْهِ ۛۚ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِيْنَ ۝٢

[1] Alif Lām Mīm!

[2] This is the Book wherein there is nothing to doubt—a guidance to those who live aright—

الَّذِيْنَ يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيْمُوْنَ الصَّلٰوةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنٰهُمْ يُنْفِقُوْنَ ۝٣

[3] To those who believe in the Unseen, who observe prayer, and give (to others) out of what We have given them,

وَالَّذِيْنَ يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِمَآ اُنْزِلَ اِلَيْكَ وَمَآ اُنْزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ ۚ وَبِالْاٰخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوْقِنُوْنَ ۝٤

[4] And who have full faith in that which hath been sent down to thee (the Prophet of Islam) and in that which hath been sent down before thee and who firmly believe in the life to follow.

اُولٰٓئِكَ عَلٰى هُدًى مِّنْ رَّبِّهِمْ ۗ وَاُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُوْنَ ۝٥

[5] These are they who have taken to the path laid down by their Lord, and these are they with whom it shall be well.

As against those who care to live aright and have full faith in the *Qur'ān*, there stands a body of people who have chosen

to reject its guidance. A description of them also is given here.

[6] As for those who have refused to believe, alike it is to them whether thou warn them or warn them not; they will not believe.

إن الذين كفروا سواء عليهم أأنذرتهم أم لم تنذرهم لا يؤمنون ⑥

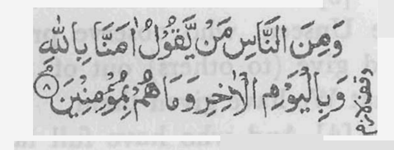
[7] God hath set a seal on their hearts, and on their hearing, and a veil lieth over their eyes; and for them awaiteth a great chastisement.

ختم الله على قلوبهم وعلى سمعهم وعلى أبصارهم غشاوة ولهم عذاب عظيم ⑦

Section 2

Midway between the two sets of people mentioned above, stand those who profess to believe in the faith presented by the *Qur'ān* but who actually are not believers.

[8] And there are some among the people who say: "We believe in God and in the Day to follow". In truth, believers they are not!


ومن الناس من يقول آمنا بالله وباليوم الآخر وما هم بمؤمنين ⑧

[9] They seek to deceive God and those who believe. In fact, they deceive themselves, though they are not conscious of

يخادعون الله والذين آمنوا وما يخدعون إلا أنفسهم وما يشعرون ⑨

[10] There is a disease (of disbelief) in their hearts; so God hath increased their disease. For them, there is a grievous chastisement,

في قلوبهم مرض فزادهم الله مرضا ولهم عذاب أليم

because of the
false assertion they make.

بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْذِبُونَ ⑩

While pretending to be working for peace and order, they spread disorder.

[11] And when it is said to them: "Do not spread disorder in the land," they say, "We are the people who promote order".

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ لَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ
قَالُوا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُصْلِحُونَ ⑪

[12] Mark! It is they who are the promoters of disorder! But this they do not realise.

أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ الْمُفْسِدُونَ وَلَٰكِنْ
لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ⑫

They regard upright behaviour as folly, and the creation of disaffection and strife as wisdom.

[13] When it is said to them: "Believe as others have believed," they say: "Shall we believe in the manner of fools?" Take it! they are themselves veritable fools, although (in their arrogance) they do not realise it.

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ آمِنُوا كَمَا آمَنَ
النَّاسُ قَالُوا أَنُؤْمِنُ كَمَا آمَنَ
السُّفَهَاءُ ۗ أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ السُّفَهَاءُ
وَلَٰكِنْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ⑬

They mock at believers.

[14] When they meet the Faithful, they say:

وَإِذَا لَقُوا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قَالُوا آمَنَّا

"We hold to your faith"; and when they are apart with the mischievous among them, they say to them: "We really are with you; we were but mocking them".

وَإِذَا خَلَوْا إِلَىٰ شَيَاطِينِهِمْ قَالُوا إِنَّا مَعَكُمْ إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُسْتَهْزِئُونَ ١٤

[15] God will surely throw back at them their mockery and let them loose to eddy about in their perfidy.

اللَّهُ يَسْتَهْزِئُ بِهِمْ وَيَمُدُّهُمْ فِي طُغْيَانِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ ١٥

[16] These are they who have purchased mis-guidance at the cost of guidance. So, neither their traffic has brought them gain, nor could they take to the right path.

أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ اشْتَرَوُا الضَّلَالَةَ بِالْهُدَىٰ فَمَا رَبِحَتْ تِجَارَتُهُمْ وَمَا كَانُوا مُهْتَدِينَ ١٦

A Simile:

[17] They are like one who was groping in the dark and kindled a fire to have light, but when the fire flamed and its light spread around, it so happened, through divine power, that suddenly the flame got extinguished, and the light vanished. The result was that darkness overspread again and they could see nothing.

مَثَلُهُمْ كَمَثَلِ الَّذِي اسْتَوْقَدَ نَارًا فَلَمَّا أَضَاءَتْ مَا حَوْلَهُ ذَهَبَ اللَّهُ بِنُورِهِمْ وَتَرَكَهُمْ فِي ظُلُمَاتٍ لَا يُبْصِرُونَ ١٧

[18] So, deaf, dumb, blind, as they are, they cannot, in their state of perfidy, be reclaimed.

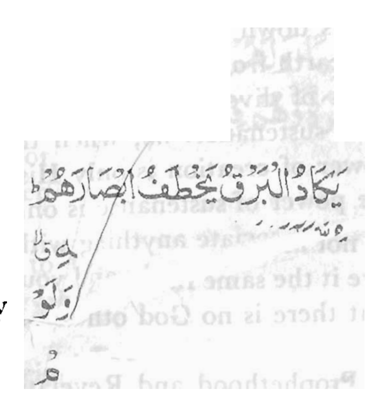
صُمٌّۢ بُكْمٌ عُمْيٌ فَهُمْ لَا يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

The Truth of God manifests itself even in natural calamities. They are blessings in disguise, bringing home to those who disregard the laws of life the painful consequences of their actions.

[19] Or they are like those who when the earth is in need of rain and God, through His grace, clouds the skies and causes a cloud-burst accompanied by darkness, thunder, and lightning, instead of welcoming, as their share, the benefits of the rain, mind only its disturbing accompaniments. They are struck with fear of death, and since they cannot stop the thundering roar, thrust their fingers into their ears against the thunder-claps, although they cannot ward off the lightning by this device; and God encircleth the disbelievers.

أَوْ كَصَيِّبٍ مِّنَ السَّمَآءِ فِيهِ ظُلُمَٰتٌ وَرَعْدٌ وَبَرْقٌ يَجْعَلُونَ أَصَٰبِعَهُمْ فِىٓ ءَاذَانِهِم مِّنَ الصَّوَٰعِقِ حَذَرَ الْمَوْتِ ۚ وَاللَّهُ مُحِيطٌۢ بِالْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿١٩﴾

[20] Whenever the lightning flashes powerfully, their terror increases; so much so that they feel that the lightning hath well-nigh snatched away their sight. So, whenever it flashes to throw light around them, they go a few paces forward and when darkness closes upon them, they hold





back. If God will it, they will remain there bereft of their hearing and their sight. Verily God hath power over all things.

وَاَبۡصَارِهِمۡؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَىۡءٍ قَدِيۡرٌ ۲۰

SECTION 3

The Unity of God: The Divine attributes of creation and sustenance are adduced in support of belief in Divine Unity, a belief which is ingrained in human nature.

[21] O ye mankind! Serve your Lord who created you and who created also those that have gone before you, that you may live righteously.

يٰۤاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اعۡبُدُوۡا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِىۡ خَلَقَكُمۡ وَالَّذِيۡنَ مِنۡ قَبۡلِكُمۡ لَعَلَّكُمۡ تَتَّقُوۡنَ ۲۱

[22] The Lord who hath made the earth a resting place for you and the heaven a covering, the heaven from which He pours down rain to water the earth from which grow fruits of diverse sort for your sustenance. So, when the power of creation is only His, and the power of sustenance is only His, do not associate anything with Him and give it the same rank; and you know that there is no God other than He!

الَّذِىۡ جَعَلَ لَـكُمُ الۡاَرۡضَ فِرَاشًا وَّالسَّمَآءَ بِنَآءً وَّاَنۡزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَآءِ مَآءً فَاَخۡرَجَ بِهٖ مِنَ الثَّمَرٰتِ رِزۡقًا لَّـكُمۡ‌ۚ فَلَا تَجۡعَلُوۡا لِلّٰهِ اَنۡدَادًا وَّاَنۡتُمۡ تَعۡلَمُوۡنَ ۲۲

Prophethood and Revelation:

And note that if you be in doubt ...uth of the Revelation

وَاِنۡ كُنۡتُمۡ فِىۡ رَيۡبٍ مِّمَّا نَزَّلۡنَا

which We have sent down through our servant, (the messenger), then you can easily decide for yourselves whether it is any production of the human intellect; or if you persist in your doubt, then produce at least a chapter, one like it, and invite beside God all those whom you regard as your helpers to help you do it.

عَلٰى عَبْدِنَا فَأْتُوْا بِسُوْرَةٍ مِّنْ
مِّثْلِهٖ ۖ وَادْعُوْا شُهَدَآءَكُمْ مِّنْ
دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ صٰدِقِيْنَ ﴿٢٣﴾

[24] And if you do it not—and the truth is that you shall never do it—then, fear the Fire of which, instead of wood, men and stones form the fuel, and which is prepared for those who reject the Truth.

فَاِنْ لَّمْ تَفْعَلُوْا وَلَنْ تَفْعَلُوْا فَاتَّقُوا
النَّارَ الَّتِيْ وَقُوْدُهَا النَّاسُ وَ
الْحِجَارَةُ ۚۖ اُعِدَّتْ لِلْكٰفِرِيْنَ ﴿٢٤﴾

[25] To those who have followed the path of belief and whose works also are righteous, to them announce that they shall have gardens of eternal bliss, instead of a place of fire, green gardens in which flow currents of water. Whensoever they will be provided therefrom with fruit for sustenance or any other form of heavenly sustenance, they shall ejaculate: "This was the very sustenance which was provided to us before. It is a recompense for goodly deeds of which we had been promised in our earthly life."
The recompense will correspond to the deed they had wrought. Apart from this they shall have virtuous and chaste female companions and their bliss will be an unfailing bliss with no diminishing.

وَبَشِّرِ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا
الصّٰلِحٰتِ اَنَّ لَهُمْ جَنّٰتٍ تَجْرِيْ
مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْاَنْهٰرُ ؕ كُلَّمَا رُزِقُوْا
مِنْهَا مِنْ ثَمَرَةٍ رِّزْقًا ۙ قَالُوْا هٰذَا
الَّذِيْ رُزِقْنَا مِنْ قَبْلُ وَاُتُوْا بِهٖ
مُتَشَابِهًا ؕ وَلَهُمْ فِيْهَآ اَزْوَاجٌ
مُّطَهَّرَةٌ ۙۗ وَّهُمْ فِيْهَا خٰلِدُوْنَ ﴿٢٥﴾

The way of God is to express the Truth at times by means of illustrations.

[26] God (whose message is intended to express a thing in a manner intelligible to the people addressed) does not for the sake of clearness hesitate to employ the illustration of even a gnat or of anything more insignificant. As for those who believe, they catch the significance of what is advanced by their Lord; but as for those who disbelieve, they cannot, due to ignorance and indifference, reach the truth. They will ask: "What meaneth God by such an illustration?" Many there are who are caused thereby to go astray, and many there are who are caused to go aright and (the Divine way is) to let none go astray except the transgressors.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَسْتَحْيِي أَنْ يَضْرِبَ
مَثَلًا مَا بَعُوضَةً فَمَا فَوْقَهَا ۚ فَأَمَّا
الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا فَيَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ
مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ ۖ وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
فَيَقُولُونَ مَاذَا أَرَادَ اللَّهُ بِهَٰذَا
مَثَلًا ۘ يُضِلُّ بِهِ كَثِيرًا وَيَهْدِي بِهِ
كَثِيرًا ۚ وَمَا يُضِلُّ بِهِ إِلَّا الْفَاسِقِينَ ﴿٢٦﴾

[27] Who are the transgressors? The transgressors are they who break the covenant of God having once admitted it, and sunder what God had bidden to be kept united and act disorderly in the land. So confirmed are they in their wickedness and perverseness that they are bound to suffer loss in consequence.

الَّذِينَ يَنْقُضُونَ عَهْدَ اللَّهِ مِنْ
بَعْدِ مِيثَاقِهِ وَيَقْطَعُونَ مَا أَمَرَ اللَّهُ
بِهِ أَنْ يُوصَلَ وَيُفْسِدُونَ فِي
الْأَرْضِ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾

The Life Hereafter—the first creation, an argument for the second.

[28] O Mankind! How can you deny God when you know that you were once without life and he gave you life, and will then cause you to die and quicken you to life

كَيْفَ تَكْفُرُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَكُنْتُمْ أَمْوَاتًا
فَأَحْيَاكُمْ ۖ ثُمَّ يُمِيتُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُحْيِيكُمْ

once again, and eventually shall you be brought back to Him.

ثُمَّ إِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ۝٢٨

The superiority of man over the rest of the living beings on the earth is emphasized.

[29] He it is who created for you all that is on earth; then turned He to the skies and formed them into seven spheres, every one of which offers you a variety of benefits; and He knoweth all things.

هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ لَكُم مَّا فِي
الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ
إِلَى السَّمَاءِ فَسَوَّاهُنَّ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ ۚ
وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ۝٢٩

Section 4

The appointment of man as the vicegerent of God on earth—the perfection of human species—the advent of Adam and the starting of Divine Revelation.

[30] And O Prophet! Ponder on this fact that when thy Lord addressed the angels: "Verily I am about to place on earth a vicegerent", they said: "Wilt Thou place therein as vicegerent a being who will cause disorder in the earth and shed blood therein, while we hymn Thy praise and extol Thy holiness, in the trust that thy purpose is free from evil and Thy movement is free from flaw?" He said: "Verily that which I have in view, you know not".

وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي
جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً ۖ قَالُوا
أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَن يُفْسِدُ فِيهَا
وَيَسْفِكُ الدِّمَاءَ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ
بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ ۖ قَالَ
إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ۝٣٠

[31] Then the process was set in motion even as was the Divine purpose, so much so, that Adam made so marked a progress intellectually, that he acquainted himself with the names of things. God set these things before the angels and asked: "Tell me the names of these if

وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ
عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ فَقَالَ أَنبِئُونِي

ye know the truth about them, as ye fancy you do".

بِأَسْمَآءِ هٰٓؤُلَآءِ إِن كُنتُمْ صٰدِقِينَ ﴿٣١﴾

[32] The angels said: "Glory be to Thee! We have no knowledge except what Thou hast caused us to know. Thou, Thou alone art the Knowing, the Wise!"

قَالُوا سُبْحٰنَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَآ إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا ۖ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٣٢﴾

[33] When the angels admitted thus their ignorance, He said: "O Adam! give them their names";
and when he gave out their names, God said: "Did I not
tell you that I know what is hidden in the heavens and in the earth, and what ye show forth and what ye conceal".

قَالَ يٰٓـَٔادَمُ أَنۢبِئْهُم بِأَسْمَآئِهِمْ ۖ فَلَمَّآ أَنۢبَأَهُم بِأَسْمَآئِهِمْ قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُل لَّكُمْ إِنِّىٓ أَعْلَمُ غَيْبَ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَأَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُونَ وَمَا كُنتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾

Angels bow before Adam—Satan refuses—the heavenly existence of Adam—the forbidden tree.

[34] When We said to the angels: "Bow to Adam," they bowed accordingly save Iblīs (Satan) who would not, and stood stiff-necked. The fact is that he was of the ungrateful.

وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِـَٔادَمَ فَسَجَدُوٓا إِلَّآ إِبْلِيسَ أَبٰى وَاسْتَكْبَرَ وَكَانَ مِنَ الْكٰفِرِينَ ﴿٣٤﴾

[35] And We said: "O Adam! Dwell thou and thy mate in the garden and eat together freely therefrom whatever ye like, but approach not yonder tree lest ye twain be of the transgressors.

وَقُلْنَا يٰٓـَٔادَمُ اسْكُنْ أَنتَ وَزَوْجُكَ الْجَنَّةَ وَكُلَا مِنْهَا رَغَدًا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمَا وَلَا تَقْرَبَا هٰذِهِ الشَّجَرَةَ فَتَكُونَا مِنَ الظّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٣٥﴾

The lapse of Adam—his confession—forgiveness, and the beginning of a new phase of life

[36] Then Satan caused the twain to fall into a lapse and be deprived of the state (the state of peace and comfort) they were in. And We said: "Get ye out, everyone an enemy unto

فَأَزَلَّهُمَا الشَّيْطٰنُ عَنْهَا فَأَخْرَجَهُمَا مِمَّا كَانَا فِيهِ ۖ وَقُلْنَا اهْبِطُوا بَعْضُكُمْ

every other. You will have to live hereafter (instead of in the garden) on earth and profit (as is in divine knowledge) by the good things of life for a period."

لِبَعۡضٍ عَدُوٌّ ۚ وَلَكُمۡ فِى الۡاَرۡضِ
مُسۡتَقَرٌّ وَّمَتَاعٌ اِلٰى حِيۡنٍ ٣٦

[37] Then did Adam receive from His Lord certain directions, and then God turned He to him in relentment. For, verily, He it is who loveth to turn and there is no limit to His mercy.

دَمُ مِنۡ رَّبِّهٖ كَلِمٰتٍ فَتَابَ
عَلَيۡهِ ؕ اِنَّهٗ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيۡمُ ٣٧

The guidance of Revelation and the Law of good and evil at work in man

[38] Adam forgiven, We issued the command, "Get ye all out from here for the new life that you have now to adopt. But remember that whenever a message of truth comes to you, you will have two ways before you. Whosoever shall follow My way, there shall come upon him no fear, nor shall he grieve.

قُلۡنَا اهۡبِطُوۡا مِنۡهَا جَمِيۡعًا ۚ فَاِمَّا
يَاۡتِيَنَّكُمۡ مِّنِّىۡ هُدًى فَمَنۡ تَبِعَ
هُدَاىَ فَلَا خَوۡفٌ عَلَيۡهِمۡ وَلَا هُمۡ
يَحۡزَنُوۡنَ ٣٨

[39] "And as for him who shall believe not and deny our signs, he shall be of the companions of Fire to dwell therein."

وَالَّذِيۡنَ كَفَرُوۡا وَكَذَّبُوۡا بِاٰيٰتِنَاۤ اُولٰٓـئِكَ
اَصۡحٰبُ النَّارِ ۚ هُمۡ فِيۡهَا خٰلِدُوۡنَ ٣٩

SECTION 5

The beginning of Divine Revelation—address to the children of Israel who were regarded as the chosen people.

[40] Oh children of Israel! Call to mind the blessings wherewith I blessed ye and be true to the promise ye gave

يٰبَنِىۡۤ اِسۡرَآءِيۡلَ اذۡكُرُوۡا نِعۡمَتِىَ
الَّتِىۡۤ اَنۡعَمۡتُ عَلَيۡكُمۡ وَاَوۡفُوۡا

بعهدي أوف بعهدكم وإياي فارهبون ۝٤٠

Me that ye will accept My guidance and will act upon it faithfully. I shall fulfil the promise I gave ye that for those who act faithfully on the guidance, they shall be rewarded with prosperity; and of Me alone, be ye mindful.

وآمنوا بما أنزلت مصدقا لما معكم ولا تكونوا أول كافر به ولا تشتروا بآياتي ثمنا قليلا وإياي فاتقون ۝٤١

[41] And believe in what I have sent down, confirming that which is with you already, and do not take the lead in rejecting it, and do not for petty gains exploit My words, and of Me be mindful.

ولا تلبسوا الحق بالباطل وتكتموا الحق وأنتم تعلمون ۝٤٢

[42] And clothe not what is true with what is untrue and raise not suspicion about it, or knowingly supress the truth.

وأقيموا الصلوة وآتوا الزكوة واركعوا مع الراكعين ۝٤٣

[43] And observe prayer, the significance of which is lost on you, and pay the poor-rate in respect of which you are no longer sincere, and bow down with those who bow down.

أتأمرون الناس بالبر وتنسون أنفسكم وأنتم تتلون الكتب أفلا تعقلون ۝٤٤

[44] Will ye enjoin righteousness upon others, and neglect to practise it yourselves, although the Book of God is with you and you are accustomed to read it. Can ye not understand this much?

Implicit trust in God in moments of trial and prayer is the one spiritual force which promotes purity of mind and brings about a change for the better in one's condition.

[45] And draw upon the forces of stead fast patience and of prayer to better our condition; but this is a

واستعينوا بالصبر والصلوة

task which is very hard to perform except for those who humble themselves before God,

وَإِنَّهَا لَكَبِيرَةٌ إِلَّا عَلَى الْخٰشِعِينَ ﴿٤٥﴾

[46] And who think that they will have to meet their Lord, as eventually indeed they will have to return to Him.

الَّذِينَ يَظُنُّونَ أَنَّهُمْ مُّلٰقُوا رَبِّهِمْ وَأَنَّهُمْ إِلَيْهِ رٰجِعُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾ ع

SECTION 6

Reference to the times and doings of the Israelites—and to the causes of the rise and fall of nations.

[47] Oh children of Israel! Call to mind the blessings with which I blessed you and lifted you above all others.

يٰبَنِي إِسْرٰٓءِيلَ اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتِيَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَأَنِّي فَضَّلْتُكُمْ عَلَى الْعٰلَمِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾

[48] And beware of the Day when no effort on the part of any one will protect you from the consequence of an evil deed, when no intercession of one for another be considered, or any compensation be accepted, and when none shall succour another.

وَاتَّقُوا يَوْمًا لَّا تَجْزِي نَفْسٌ عَنْ نَّفْسٍ شَيْـًٔا وَّلَا يُقْبَلُ مِنْهَا شَفٰعَةٌ وَّلَا يُؤْخَذُ مِنْهَا عَدْلٌ وَّلَا هُمْ يُنْصَرُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾

The deliverance of the Israelites from the captivity of the Pharaohs of Egypt and the grant to them of the Book and the Criterion. Idolatry and the worship of the cow among the Israelites.

[49] And call to mind the occasion when We rescued you from the bondage imposed upon you by the Pharaohs who had meted out to you a cruel treatment, slain your male children, and

وَإِذْ نَجَّيْنٰكُمْ مِّنْ اٰلِ فِرْعَوْنَ يَسُومُونَكُمْ سُوٓءَ الْعَذَابِ يُذَبِّحُونَ أَبْنَآءَكُمْ وَيَسْتَحْيُونَ نِسَآءَكُمْ

let your female children alone live to serve as slaves to the members of the governing party. And in this lay a mighty ordeal for you.

وَفِي ذَٰلِكُم بَلَاءٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٤٩﴾

[50] And call to mind the occasion when as you were coming out of Egypt and the Pharaoh following you, we parted the sea in such a manner that you came out safely and the people of Pharaoh got drowned before your very eyes as you were watching (the scene from the shore.)

وَإِذْ فَرَقْنَا بِكُمُ الْبَحْرَ فَأَنجَيْنَاكُمْ وَأَغْرَقْنَا آلَ فِرْعَوْنَ وَأَنتُمْ تَنظُرُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾

[51] And call to mind the forty nights of our engagements with Moses when, during his absence, ye took to the calf and turned away from the path of Truth which was indeed a great lapse on your part.

وَإِذْ وَاعَدْنَا مُوسَىٰ أَرْبَعِينَ لَيْلَةً ثُمَّ اتَّخَذْتُمُ الْعِجْلَ مِن بَعْدِهِ وَأَنتُمْ ظَالِمُونَ ﴿٥١﴾

[52] Nevertheless, We in our graciousness forgave you that you might prove grateful.

ثُمَّ عَفَوْنَا عَنكُم مِّن بَعْدِ ذَٰلِكَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾

[53] And call to mind the occasion when We, having fulfilled the engagement of forty nights with Moses, gave to Moses the Book (the *Torah*) and the Criterion that you might be rightly guided.

وَإِذْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتَابَ وَالْفُرْقَانَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾

[54] And call to mind also when Moses, having come down the hill with the *Torah* vouchsafed to him, and finding you engaged in the worship of the calf, cried out, "Oh my people! How sad that

وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِ يَا قَوْمِ إِنَّكُمْ ظَلَمْتُمْ أَنفُسَكُم بِاتِّخَاذِكُمُ

you have forgotten your promise! Verily, you have wronged yourselves by worshipping a calf; wherefore turn to your Maker in repentance and, as a mark of expiation, mortify yourselves. That will be the right thing for you in the sight of your Maker.' Then your repentance was accepted and He turned to you; for indeed, He oft forgives, the Merciful.

الْعِجْلَ فَتُوبُوٓا إِلَىٰ بَارِئِكُمْ
فَاقْتُلُوٓا أَنفُسَكُمْ ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ
لَّكُمْ عِندَ بَارِئِكُمْ فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ
إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿٥٤﴾

The Israelites doubt divine Revelation.

[55] And call to mind when you had said, "O Moses! We will not believe until we behold thee openly hold converse with God." You know what the result was of your impertinence? The result was that thereupon a thunderbolt seized you even while you were looking on!

وَإِذْ قُلْتُمْ يَٰمُوسَىٰ لَن نُّؤْمِنَ
لَكَ حَتَّىٰ نَرَى اللَّهَ جَهْرَةً فَأَخَذَتْكُمُ
الصَّٰعِقَةُ وَأَنتُمْ تَنظُرُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾

[56] Then We raised you to life again after you were dead, that haply you give thanks.

ثُمَّ بَعَثْنَٰكُم مِّنۢ بَعْدِ
مَوْتِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٥٦﴾

In the waterless desert of Sinai, the good things of life were provided to the Israelites. But they proved to be ungrateful to God.

[57] And when it was found that the lack of water and the heat of the sun in the desert of Sinai were about to wipe you out of existence,) We caused the clouds to

وَظَلَّلْنَا عَلَيْكُمُ الْغَمَامَ وَأَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمُ
الْمَنَّ وَالسَّلْوَىٰ كُلُوا مِن طَيِّبَٰتِ

spread over you, and We sent down upon you *Manna* and *Salwa* saying, "Eat freely of the good things we have provided for you." Still they did not give up their evil ways and suffered in consequence. They did not hurt us by their ungrateful behaviour; but they hurt their own selves.

مَا رَزَقْنٰكُمْ ۭ وَمَا ظَلَمُوْنَا وَلٰكِنْ
كَانُوْٓا اَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُوْنَ ۝٥٧

When the Israelites returned to power and prosperity, instead of expressing thankfulness to God in all humility, they grew arrogant.

[58] And then, cannot the memory of that incident bring you the sense of contrition when you were before the city and we commanded you: "Enter this city triumphantly and eat therefrom freely whatever you like and when you enter the gate thereof do so in humility seeking forgiveness, and muttering 'Hitatun,' (Oh God remove from us the impurities of sin) and We will pardon you your faults and increase the number of those who do good?"

وَاِذْ قُلْنَا ادْخُلُوْا هٰذِهِ الْقَرْيَةَ
فَكُلُوْا مِنْهَا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمْ رَغَدًا
وَّادْخُلُوا الْبَابَ سُجَّدًا وَّقُوْلُوْا
حِطَّةٌ نَّغْفِرْ لَكُمْ خَطٰيٰكُمْ ۭ
وَسَنَزِيْدُ الْمُحْسِنِيْنَ ۝٥٨

[59] But it so happened that the unruly among you changed the phraseology of contrition into other than what was given them, whereupon, We sent upon the unruly a scourge from above for their disobedience.

فَبَدَّلَ الَّذِيْنَ ظَلَمُوْا قَوْلًا
غَيْرَ الَّذِيْ قِيْلَ لَهُمْ فَاَنْزَلْنَا عَلَي
الَّذِيْنَ ظَلَمُوْا رِجْزًا مِّنَ السَّمَاۗءِ
بِمَا كَانُوْا يَفْسُقُوْنَ ۝٥٩

SECTION 7

The discovery of springs of fresh water in the desert of Sinai and the internecine quarrels among the Israelites over them.

[60] And call to mind when Moses asked of Us water for his people and We said: "Smite the rock with thy staff and you will see that there is water available for you." Then Moses carried out the behest, so much so, that from the rock gushed twelve fountains and all the tribes knew their drinking places. You were told at the time: "Eat and drink of what God hath provided and do not go about creating disorder in the land."

وَإِذِ اسْتَسْقَىٰ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِ
فَقُلْنَا اضْرِب بِّعَصَاكَ الْحَجَرَ ۖ
فَانفَجَرَتْ مِنْهُ اثْنَتَا عَشْرَةَ عَيْنًا ۖ
قَدْ عَلِمَ كُلُّ أُنَاسٍ مَّشْرَبَهُمْ ۖ
كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا مِن رِّزْقِ اللَّهِ وَلَا
تَعْثَوْا فِي الْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٦٠﴾

The state of subservience or slavery demoralizes a people, and little stamina is left in them to urge them on to high resolves. The Israelites freed themselves from the oppression of the Pharaohs and a bright future was in store for them. But they yearned for the petty comforts they had enjoyed in their state of slavery under the Pharaohs and the denial in the state of freedom of even the smallest comfort of yore was galling to them.

[61] And then recollect that phase of your past history which has a lesson for you, when you had cried out to Moses: "O Moses! we will not put up with just one sort of food. Call on Thy Lord to bring forth for us of that which the earth groweth—its herbs, its cucumbers, its garlic, lentils and onions." He answered,

وَإِذْ قُلْتُمْ يَا مُوسَىٰ لَن نَّصْبِرَ عَلَىٰ
طَعَامٍ وَاحِدٍ فَادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ
يُخْرِجْ لَنَا مِمَّا تُنبِتُ الْأَرْضُ مِن
بَقْلِهَا وَقِثَّائِهَا وَفُومِهَا وَعَدَسِهَا
وَبَصَلِهَا ۖ قَالَ أَتَسْتَبْدِلُونَ الَّذِي

"Ah! What desires do you entertain! Will you exchange the superior for the inferior, the high state of freedom for the satisfaction of a petty appetite?" He exclaimed in disgust: "If ye have grown so degenerate, then get ye down to some city where ye can have the things ye desire." The result was that the Israelites came to be afflicted with humiliation and homelessness and drew on themselves the displeasure of God, and this, because they disregarded the directions of God and slew their prophets for no reason, and this because, they would not yield to the way of progress and rebelled against it and indulged in excesses.

هُوَ أَدْنَىٰ بِالَّذِي هُوَ خَيْرٌ ۚ اهْبِطُوا مِصْرًا فَإِنَّ لَكُم مَّا سَأَلْتُمْ ۗ وَضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الذِّلَّةُ وَالْمَسْكَنَةُ وَبَاءُو بِغَضَبٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَيَقْتُلُونَ النَّبِيِّينَ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوا وَّكَانُوا يَعْتَدُونَ ﴿٦١﴾ ع

SECTION 8

The announcement is made that the way of salvation lies along the path of belief and righteous action. Race or family or any religious sectionalism does not count. When the Jews gave up the way of belief and righteous action, neither their sense of racial superiority, nor their religious groupism was of any avail. The Law of God never turned to ascertain to what race or to what religious group people belonged. It was concerned only with the nature of the activity they engaged themselves in; and when it was found that they did not stand the test of righteousness, they were condemned and cast away.

[62] Verily, they who believe (in the message of the Prophet Muhammad), and they who are Jews and Christians

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالنَّصَارَىٰ وَالصَّابِئِينَ مَنْ آمَنَ

and Sabians—
whoever believeth in God and the
day to come when the life lived is to be accounted for,
and doeth that
which is right—shall have
their recompense with their
Lord: Fear shall not come
upon them, neither shall they
grieve.

بِاللّٰهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْاٰخِرِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا
فَلَهُمْ اَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا
خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُوْنَ ۝٦٢

The Jews had degraded themselves to such a state that they never observed any religious injunction in sincerity, but tried to devise various new methods to absolve themselves from the proper discharge of their duties. Their religious observance was only a mere show.

[63] And call to mind that chapter of your history also when We had taken a covenant from you (on the occasion when you were standing at the base) and, we had raised the (mount of) Tur high above you. We had thus said: "Hold fast to what We have delivered to you and give heed to that which is therein, that you may grow righteous."

[64] Yet you turned back thereafter. But for the grace and mercy towards you, you should have, through your wavered behaviour, surely been losers.

[65] And full well did you know that to such of you as had committed excesses on the Sabbath day by devising various excuses to absolve themselves from the religious duties prescribed, We had said: "Ye be despised as apes (or hunted out of human society)". So it happened;

وَاِذْ اَخَذْنَا مِيْثَاقَكُمْ
وَرَفَعْنَا فَوْقَكُمُ الطُّوْرَ
خُذُوْا مَآ اٰتَيْنٰكُمْ بِقُوَّةٍ
وَّاذْكُرُوْا مَا فِيْهِ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُوْنَ ۝٦٣
ثُمَّ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ ذٰلِكَ فَلَوْلَا
فَضْلُ اللّٰهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهٗ لَكُنْتُمْ
مِّنَ الْخٰسِرِيْنَ ۝٦٤
وَلَقَدْ عَلِمْتُمُ الَّذِيْنَ اعْتَدَوْا مِنْكُمْ
لَهُمْ كُوْنُوْا قِرَدَةً
خٰسِئِيْنَ ۝٦٥

[66] And We made this serve as a warning to those of their time, and also to those who came after them. It was a caution even to the righteous.

فَجَعَلْنٰهَا نَكَالًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهَا وَمَا خَلْفَهَا وَمَوْعِظَةً لِّلْمُتَّقِيْنَ ﴿٦٦﴾

It had become a habit with the Israelites to raise an endless number of unnecessary questions and hair-splitting issues, in respect of religion instead of conforming to the simple religious directions.

[67] And call to mind when Moses said to his people, "God desireth you to sacrifice a heifer". Instead of carrying out this simple direction in a straightforward way, they began to address him various sorts of querries. They asked: "Doest thou make a jest of us"? Said Moses: "God forbid that I should (in giving exposition of religious injunctions) be one of the triflers."

وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوْسٰى لِقَوْمِهٖٓ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تَذْبَحُوْا بَقَرَةً ط قَالُوْٓا أَتَتَّخِذُنَا هُزُوًا ط قَالَ أَعُوْذُ بِاللّٰهِ أَنْ أَكُوْنَ مِنَ الْجٰهِلِيْنَ ﴿٦٧﴾

[68] Thereupon they said: "If you are in the right, call upon thy Lord to make clear to us what the heifer is like which we have to sacrifice? We want details." Moses answered: "God says: 'She is a cow, neither old nor young, a middling between'. Now that the details are given to you, do as you are bidden."

قَالُوا ادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّنْ لَّنَا مَا هِيَ ط قَالَ إِنَّهٗ يَقُوْلُ إِنَّهَا بَقَرَةٌ لَّا فَارِضٌ وَّلَا بِكْرٌ ط عَوَانٌۢ بَيْنَ ذٰلِكَ ط فَافْعَلُوْا مَا تُؤْمَرُوْنَ ﴿٦٨﴾

[69] They raised a further question. They said: "Call on your Lord to make clear

قَالُوا ادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّنْ لَّنَا مَا لَوْنُهَا ط قَالَ إِنَّهٗ يَقُوْلُ إِنَّهَا

to us what colour it is?" He answered, "God says: 'She is a heifer, brown in colour, deep brown—and pleasing to the eye'."

بقرة صفراء فاقع لونها تسر النظرين ﴿٦٩﴾

[70] When the details about colour also were thus afforded they raised another issue. They said: "Despite these details, it is not easy for us to recognize the animal. So call on your Lord for us to make it further clear what cow it is—for to us cows seem alike, and verily if God pleases, we shall be guided aright."

قالوا ادع لنا ربك يبين لنا ما هي إن البقر تشبه علينا وإنا إن شاء الله لمهتدون ﴿٧٠﴾

[71] Whereupon Moses said: "God says: 'She is a cow never employed in ploughing the earth nor in watering the fields, sound, free of any blemish'." So crestfallen, they said: "Now hast thou given us the exact picture". Then they sacrificed her, though they seemed at heart disinclined to do it.

قال إنه يقول إنها بقرة لا ذلول تثير الأرض ولا تسقي الحرث مسلمة لا شية فيها قالوا الئن جئت بالحق فذبحوها وما كادوا يفعلون ﴿٧١﴾

SECTION 9

[72] And call to mind the occasion when you slew a man and then foisted the deed on one another, and God disclosed what you were trying to conceal.

وإذ قتلتم نفسا فادرءتم فيها والله مخرج ما كنتم تكتمون ﴿٧٢﴾

[73] Wherefore We said: "You touch him (the suspect) with a part of the dead". This was done, and the identity of the murderer was confirmed. Thus doeth God

فقلنا اضربوه ببعضها كذلك يحي الله الموتى ويريكم ءايته

revive the dead and makes manifest to you his signs that haply you understand.

لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٧٣﴾

The depth of spiritual and moral degradation which the Israelites had reached is now referred to. They did not appear to be even aware of their degradation: Their mind seemed reconciled to it.

[74] Yet your hearts hardened thereafter and became hard as rocks and harder still—for there are rocks from which gush streams, and some there are out of which, when cleft, water issues forth, and indeed some there are which fall down through fear of God. So pity on those hearts which are harder than even rocks! And bear in mind that (the Law of) God is not heedless of what you do.

ثُمَّ قَسَتْ قُلُوبُكُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ ذٰلِكَ فَهِيَ كَالْحِجَارَةِ اَوْ اَشَدُّ قَسْوَةً ۚ وَاِنَّ مِنَ الْحِجَارَةِ لَمَا يَتَفَجَّرُ مِنْهُ الْاَنْهٰرُ ۚ وَاِنَّ مِنْهَا لَمَا يَشَّقَّقُ فَيَخْرُجُ مِنْهُ الْمَآءُ ۚ وَاِنَّ مِنْهَا لَمَا يَهْبِطُ مِنْ خَشْيَةِ اللّٰهِ ۗ وَمَا اللّٰهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٧٤﴾

Having referred to the early history of the Israelites, the *Qur'ān* reviews their subsequent deeds, their beliefs and their straying away from the path of truth. Their basic weakness lay in the fact that they had ceased to possess a correct knowledge of their scripture and had ceased to act righteously in consonance therewith.

[75] O Muslims! Do you still expect the Jews to be mindful of what is stated in their own scripture and in accordance therewith believe in your scripture also, just for your sake, when you are aware that there is a party of them who listen to the word of God and yet having under-

اَفَتَطْمَعُوْنَ اَنْ يُّؤْمِنُوْا لَكُمْ وَقَدْ كَانَ فَرِيْقٌ مِّنْهُمْ يَسْمَعُوْنَ كَلٰمَ اللّٰهِ ثُمَّ يُحَرِّفُوْنَهٗ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا

stood it, tamper with it, and they know what they do?

عَقَلُوهُ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٧٥﴾

[76] And their behaviour is this: when they meet those who believe, they say, "We believe"; but when they meet apart, one with another, they say, "Why blab you to them what God hath revealed to you, so that they might throw it back at you as the very thing received from your own God. Can you not understand this much?"

وَإِذَا لَقُوا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قَالُوا آمَنَّا وَإِذَا خَلَا بَعْضُهُمْ إِلَىٰ بَعْضٍ قَالُوا أَتُحَدِّثُونَهُمْ بِمَا فَتَحَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ لِيُحَاجُّوكُمْ بِهِ عِنْدَ رَبِّكُمْ ۚ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٧٦﴾

[77] Know they not that God knoweth what they hide, as well as what they disclose?

أَوَلَا يَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا يُسِرُّونَ وَمَا يُعْلِنُونَ ﴿٧٧﴾

Their scribes trafficked in Truth, and the religious assets of the common people were nothing but their self-satisfying beliefs and the fervour of ignorance.

The religious leaders of the Jews imposed their own views and their own beliefs on the textual content of their scripture (*Torah*), and said that the regulations formulated by them were as sacred as those contained in the scripture, and were therefore equally binding on the people at large.

[78] And among them there are unlettered folk who know nothing of the Book except fantasies about it and beguile themselves with conjectures.

وَمِنْهُمْ أُمِّيُّونَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا أَمَانِيَّ وَإِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَظُنُّونَ ﴿٧٨﴾

[79] Woe then to those who write the Book with their own hands, and coin regulations to suit their convenience and pass them for divine injunctions and say that these are from God just to secure paltry gains. Woe

فَوَيْلٌ لِلَّذِينَ يَكْتُبُونَ الْكِتَابَ بِأَيْدِيهِمْ ثُمَّ يَقُولُونَ هَٰذَا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ لِيَشْتَرُوا بِهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا ۖ

فَوَيْلٌ لَّهُم مِّمَّا كَتَبَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَوَيْلٌ لَّهُم مِّمَّا يَكْسِبُونَ ۝٧٩

to them for what their hands have written, and woe to them for the earnings which they have made thereby.

The ignorance of the Jews was so great that they firmly believed that they were a people who had already secured salvation. That was why they believed that it was impossible for them to be ever thrown into Hell. The *Qur'ān* contradicts this claim and says that the assignment of 'Hell 'or 'Heaven' to any is not done on the basis of communities or nations or any racial distinctions. On the other hand, salvation depends entirely on right beliefs and righteous actions. He who earns evil by his actions will be given a corresponding chastisement, and he who earns good by his actions will be recompensed with salvation, whosoever he might be and to whatever community or group he might belong.

وَقَالُوا لَن تَمَسَّنَا النَّارُ إِلَّا أَيَّامًا مَّعْدُودَةً ۚ قُلْ أَتَّخَذْتُمْ عِندَ اللَّهِ عَهْدًا فَلَن يُخْلِفَ اللَّهُ عَهْدَهُ ۖ أَمْ تَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ۝٨٠

[80] And they say: "The Fire shall not touch us except for a limited number of days", for, they believe that they are a people who have been reserved for salvation, and that their transitory stay in Fire will be only to burn out their slight impurities, and that once this is done, they will be rendered fit to enter Heaven. Say: "Have ye received any such unconditional promise from God, and also that God will not go back upon it? Or impute ye to God that of which ye have no knowledge?"

بَلَىٰ مَن كَسَبَ سَيِّئَةً وَأَحَاطَتْ

[81] Nay! Salvation is not the heritage of any particular group of people so that they might enjoy it under every circumstance.

The law of God is this that whosoever, no matter to what group he might belong, earneth evil, the consequences flowing from it will envelop him; and he then belongs to those who deserve hell to dwell therein forever.

بِهٖ خَطِيْٓـَٔتُهٗ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ اَصْحٰبُ
النَّارِ ۚ هُمْ فِيْهَا خٰلِدُوْنَ ﴿٨١﴾

[82] And whosoever believes properly and acts righteously, he is of the group who deserves heaven to dwell therein forever.

وَالَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ اُولٰٓئِكَ
اَصْحٰبُ الْجَنَّةِ ۚ هُمْ فِيْهَا خٰلِدُوْنَ ﴿٨٢﴾

SECTION 10

[83] And call to mind the occasion when We made the children of Israel enter into a covenant with Us (What was that covenant? Was it a pandering to the racial pride of the Israelites? Or was it a covenant guaranteeing salvation to them because of their being Israelites? Nay. It was a covenant touching right beliefs and right activity. The covenant was) that they would serve none but God and be good to parents and to kindred and to orphans and to the needy, and to speak to others in a gentle manner, and to observe prayer, and to pay the prescribed poor-rate. These were the basic truths to uphold which they had given their word. But thereafter they backed out, barring a few and they are still back-sliders.

وَاِذْ اَخَذْنَا مِيْثَاقَ بَنِيْٓ اِسْرَآءِيْلَ لَا
تَعْبُدُوْنَ اِلَّا اللّٰهَ ۗ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ
اِحْسَانًا وَّذِي الْقُرْبٰى وَالْيَتٰمٰى وَ
الْمَسٰكِيْنِ وَقُوْلُوْا لِلنَّاسِ حُسْنًا وَّ
اَقِيْمُوا الصَّلٰوةَ وَاٰتُوا الزَّكٰوةَ ۗ ثُمَّ
تَوَلَّيْتُمْ اِلَّا قَلِيْلًا مِّنْكُمْ وَاَنْتُمْ مُّعْرِضُوْنَ ﴿٨٣﴾

The indifference shown by the scribes or the religious leaders of the Jews to the spirit underlying religious injunctions had reached a stage when religion came to be plied as a mere show and function as an instrument for fulfilling their selfish ends. The inevitable result was that few cared to pay regard to the basic principles underlying the religious injunctions. On the other hand, emphasis was laid on mere trivialities or petty details, although strict adherence to the basic principles of religion would hardly have given occasion to turn to trivialities. The scribes had strayed away from the path laid down by their Scriptures.

[84] And then call to mind the occasion when you had promised to abide by Our injunctions: "You shall not shed the blood of your own people, nor expel them from your homes". To this you had agreed and you admit this even now.

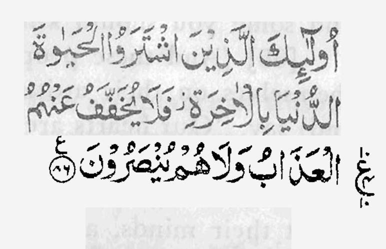
[85] Then it is you, the very ones who slay your own people and drive some of them from your homes, charging them with sin and inordinacy, (and none of you pay attention to the injunctions of religion in this respect.) And if they are brought back to you as captives, you redeem them, (and say that this is so ordained by religion), although, (if you are so very mindful of your religion) you should have known that it was unlawful for you to have driven them out. (How great is your disregard for religion that in the matter of redeeming captives you think of religion, but that you do not think



of religion when you oppress your own people and drive them into the hands of your enemies and connive at their being made captives.) Follow you then only certain portions of your Scripture, and neglect the other? So, what shall be the return of any one among you who does this except disgrace in this life, and on the day of Resurrection a very severe chastisement. Remember that God is not unaware of what you do.

إِلَّا خِزْيٌ فِي الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا ۚ وَيَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ يُرَدُّوْنَ إِلَىٰ أَشَدِّ الْعَذَابِ ؕ وَمَا اللّٰهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿٨٥﴾

[86] Indeed, these are the people who have purchased the life of this world at the cost of the life to follow. (There is no hope of improvement for such people.) Neither shall their chastisement be lightened, nor shall they have any help from anywhere.



SECTION 11

This is what usually happens in life, if truth or adherence to truth is given the go-by and one gets obsessed with self-interest. And that is why, those who have laid the primary stress on self-interest have always set themselves against reformers and messengers of truth. The Israelites were engaged in counteracting the work of the Prophet with the same zeal with which they opposed their own prophets and even assassinated some of them.

[87] And indeed, O people of the Book, for your guidance, We first gave to Moses the Book and after him sent We

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتٰبَ وَقَفَّيْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِهٖ بِالرُّسُلِ وَآتَيْنَا عِيسَى

messengers in succession; and to Jesus son of Mary We gave clear proofs of his mission and afforded him the assistance of the Holy Spirit. But you opposed every call. Has it become a second nature with you that as oft as an apostle came to you with anything disagreeable to your mind, you should grow arrogant with him, and that you should call some of them as impostors and some you should kill.[1]

ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ الْبَيِّنٰتِ وَاَيَّدْنٰهُ بِرُوْحِ الْقُدُسِ ۭ اَفَكُلَّمَا جَاۗءَكُمْ رَسُوْلٌۢ بِمَا لَا تَهْوٰٓى اَنْفُسُكُمُ اسْتَكْبَرْتُمْ ۚ فَفَرِيْقًا كَذَّبْتُمْ ۡ وَفَرِيْقًا تَقْتُلُوْنَ ﴿٨٧﴾

[88] (And these people pride themselves on their attitude and) say, "Our hearts are protected by safe coverings," (so much so, that no new thing can affect their minds, although such an attitude does not argue either strength of belief or regard for truth. On the other hand,) such an attitude is a curse in itself, (since it has disabled them to listen attentively to any word of truth or to profit by it.) It is why that they rarely feel inclined to pay heed to truth and accept it.

وَقَالُوْا قُلُوْبُنَا غُلْفٌ ۭ بَلْ لَّعَنَهُمُ اللّٰهُ بِكُفْرِهِمْ فَقَلِيْلًا مَّا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ ﴿٨٨﴾

[89] So when for their guidance a book, (the *Qur'ān*,) came to them

وَلَمَّا جَاۗءَهُمْ كِتٰبٌ مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللّٰهِ

[1] The affirmation of Truth and rigid adherence to tradition are two different things. There is no virtue in that staunch adherence to some view, if it obliges you to refuse to listen to what others have to say. The religious leaders of the Jews were victims to this state of mind, and were proud of their attitude and looked upon it as a sign of their perfection in belief.

from God, a book which confirmed what was already with them, and for the coming of which they had, (on the basis of the prophecies contained in the *Torah*,) fervently prayed and to the advent of which they had ardently looked forward, and invoked for a victory over those who disputed the prophecies, and when that came to them—and they knew that it had—then they flatly refused to recognize it. So despised of God do they stand. (The way of righteous living and of progress cannot open out for them.)

مُصَدِّقٌ لِّمَا مَعَهُمْ وَكَانُوا مِن
قَبْلُ يَسْتَفْتِحُونَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوا فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُم مَّا عَرَفُوا
كَفَرُوا بِهِ فَلَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٨٩﴾

Of the obstacles which thwart the free acceptance of truth, the toughest is the personal, class or racial prejudice.

[90] (How wicked!) For what a vile price have they sold themselves! They have refused to believe in what God hath sent down, and they have done this for the reason that the Prophet to whom it was delivered was not one of themselves. (They have not realized that God selects for distinction whom he likes. The choice is never restricted to any family or class. These people had already become, through their wickedness, a despised people. Their intransigence to accept the new call rendered them liable to further degradation.) So they had to draw on themselves

بِئْسَمَا اشْتَرَوْا بِهِ أَنفُسَهُمْ أَن
يَكْفُرُوا بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ بَغْيًا أَن
يُنَزِّلَ اللَّهُ مِن فَضْلِهِ عَلَى مَن يَشَاءُ
مِنْ عِبَادِهِ فَبَاءُوا بِغَضَبٍ عَلَى

غَضَبٍ ۚ وَلِلْكَٰفِرِينَ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ ﴿٩٠﴾

repeatedly the displeasure of God. Humiliation is the punishment for those who refuse to follow the path of righteousness. (That is the law of life.)

The normal attitude of the religious-minded all over the world is that whenever a new form of truth is revealed, they invariably cry out, "We have a religion of our own; we do not need any new truth", although they forget that they are not, in practice, true even to the religion which they say is their own. The *Qur'ān* says, "Religion (*Dīn*) for all and of all is but one and the same, and my advent is not to replace the truths revealed earlier. On the other hand, I have come to stimulate among mankind the right belief in them and the right activity in consonance therewith."

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ ءَامِنُوا۟ بِمَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ قَالُوا۟ نُؤْمِنُ بِمَآ أُنزِلَ عَلَيْنَا وَيَكْفُرُونَ بِمَا وَرَآءَهُۥ وَهُوَ ٱلْحَقُّ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا مَعَهُمْ ۗ قُلْ فَلِمَ تَقْتُلُونَ أَنۢبِيَآءَ ٱللَّهِ مِن قَبْلُ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٩١﴾

[91] When it is said to them, "Believe in what God hath sent down," they say, "We believe only in what hath been sent down to us". And they disbelieve everything else, although it confirms what is already with them. O Prophet! say: "If you really believe in your own Book and refuse to respond to the call of the *Qur'ān* (simply because it is not necessary to do so for those who believe in the *Torah*,) why, if you indeed believed in your book, did you, of old, slay the prophets of God who had exhorted you to follow your own book, (the *Torah*, and why did you rebel against them instead of believing in what they said?")

[92] And you know for certain that Moses came to you with clear proofs of his mission. But when he was away from you (for forty days) you took in his absence the calf for your deity and in this manner you certainly deviated from the Truth.

وَلَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ مُوسَىٰ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ ثُمَّ اتَّخَذْتُمُ الْعِجْلَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَأَنْتُمْ ظَالِمُونَ ﴿٩٢﴾

[93] And call to mind when We had extracted a promise from you to stand by the faith ordained by God and raised the mountain high above you, (what was your behaviour thereafter?) You had been ordered to hold fast with resolution to what We had delivered to you. You avowed with your tongue, "We have listened", and at heart you said to yourselves, "We are not prepared to respond". And then it became evident that the cult of the calf had really seized their hearts in consequence of their rejection of the truth. O Prophet! say to them, "(Having disdained to respond to the call of truth,) you have proclaimed that you are men of Faith. Does that Faith direct you to vileness?"

وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَكُمْ وَرَفَعْنَا فَوْقَكُمُ الطُّورَ خُذُوا مَا آتَيْنَاكُمْ بِقُوَّةٍ وَاسْمَعُوا قَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَعَصَيْنَا وَأُشْرِبُوا فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الْعِجْلَ بِكُفْرِهِمْ قُلْ بِئْسَمَا يَأْمُرُكُمْ بِهِ إِيمَانُكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٩٣﴾

If they really believed in the life-hereafter, they should never feel alarmed at death, nor become votaries of the life of this world. The children of Israel, because of their worldliness and greed, were blind to divine truth.

[94] (These people say that salvation is for them only.) Tell

قُلْ إِنْ كَانَتْ لَكُمُ الدَّارُ الْآخِرَةُ

them: "If the abode of the Hereafter is meant by God exclusively for you and none else, then yearn for death without fear if you are staunch in your belief (and not run after this world or become votaries of a fleeting life.")

عِندَ اللّٰهِ خَالِصَةً مِّن دُونِ النَّاسِ
فَتَمَنَّوُا الْمَوْتَ إِن كُنتُمْ صٰدِقِينَ ﴿٩٤﴾

[95] O Prophet! You will then see that they will never do this, since they know what evil things they have wrought by their hands and sent there in advance; and God knoweth the offenders.

وَلَن يَتَمَنَّوْهُ أَبَدًا بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ
أَيْدِيهِمْ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالظّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٩٥﴾

[96] And not merely this, but you will also notice that of all men, they are the most covetous of the transitory life of this world, even more covetous than the polytheists, altough they claim to be believers in the Unity of God. Every one of them desires to live a thousand years, although, even were this long life afforded to them, they will not escape from the punishment of the Hereafter, and God seeth through all that they do.

وَلَتَجِدَنَّهُمْ أَحْرَصَ النَّاسِ عَلٰى
حَيٰوةٍ ۚ وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا ۚ
يَوَدُّ أَحَدُهُمْ لَوْ يُعَمَّرُ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ ۚ
وَمَا هُوَ بِمُزَحْزِحِهِ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ أَن
يُعَمَّرَ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ بَصِيرٌ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٦﴾

Section 12

He who rejects Revelation, in fact rejects the Divine Law of Guidance.

[97] O Prophet! This is the Word of God which under His command, Gabriel had it enter thy heart, the Word which confirms the Word which was sent down

قُلْ مَن كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِّجِبْرِيلَ
فَإِنَّهُ نَزَّلَهُ عَلٰى قَلْبِكَ
بِإِذْنِ اللّٰهِ مُصَدِّقًا

hitherto. Therein is a guidance for man and an announcement of prosperity and success for those who believe in it. But if these people have resolved to discredit Revelation and in their ignorance cry out, "We will never admit any word delivered by Gabriel, for he is our enemy,"

لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَهُدًى وَّبُشْرٰى
لِلْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿٩٧﴾

[98] Tell them that God will not befriend those who are hostile to God and His angels and His apostles and to Gabriel and Micahel, and have rejected the truth.

مَنْ كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِّلّٰهِ وَمَلٰٓئِكَتِهٖ
وَرُسُلِهٖ وَجِبْرِيْلَ وَمِيْكٰىلَ فَاِنَّ
اللّٰهَ عَدُوٌّ لِّلْكٰفِرِيْنَ ﴿٩٨﴾

The Prophet is asked to annouce that the call of Divine message has always been delivered with the clear light of Truth which no truth-loving person can ever discredit. That the Jewish scribes denied it, despite their knowledge of the Book of God, should not be a matter for surprise. This is not their first demonstration of disbelief: this has been a habit with them.

[99] O Prophet! Be assured that We have sent to thee clear signs and none shall deny them except those who have placed themselves outside the pale of truthfulness.

وَلَقَدْ اَنْزَلْنَآ اِلَيْكَ اٰيٰتٍۢ بَيِّنٰتٍ
وَمَا يَكْفُرُ بِهَآ اِلَّا الْفٰسِقُوْنَ ﴿٩٩﴾

[100] And oft as they entered into an engagement to follow the Truth, one or other of their groups set it aside. The truth is that a majority of them consist of people whose hearts are bereft of Faith.

اَوَكُلَّمَا عٰهَدُوْا عَهْدًا نَّبَذَهٗ فَرِيْقٌ
مِّنْهُمْ ۭ بَلْ اَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ ﴿١٠٠﴾

[101] So, when an apostle (Jesus) came to them from God confirming the scripture that was with them, some

وَلَمَّا جَآءَهُمْ رَسُوْلٌ مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللّٰهِ
مُصَدِّقٌ لِّمَا مَعَهُمْ نَبَذَ فَرِيْقٌ

مِّنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَٰبَ كِتَٰبَ اللَّهِ وَرَآءَ ظُهُورِهِمْ كَأَنَّهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٠١﴾

of them to whom it had been given, threw the scripture of God behind their back as if they knew it not.

Reference is made here to the intellectual and moral degeneration of the Israelites. They had become victims to sorcery, in utter disregard of the commandments of God. Incidentally, the *Qur'ān* declares that the stories circulated in justification of sorcery had no foundation.

وَاتَّبَعُوا مَا تَتْلُوا الشَّيَٰطِينُ عَلَىٰ مُلْكِ سُلَيْمَٰنَ ۖ وَمَا كَفَرَ سُلَيْمَٰنُ وَلَٰكِنَّ الشَّيَٰطِينَ كَفَرُوا يُعَلِّمُونَ النَّاسَ السِّحْرَ وَمَآ أُنزِلَ عَلَى الْمَلَكَيْنِ بِبَابِلَ هَٰرُوتَ وَمَٰرُوتَ ۚ وَمَا يُعَلِّمَانِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ حَتَّىٰ يَقُولَآ

[102] And then mark that these people, forgetful of the teachings of the Book of God, fell into polytheistic ways of living sponsored by the evil minds among them under the supposed sanction to Solomon, although Solomon never was given to heresy. The fact is that it was these evil minds who instructed them in sorcery. And even this is not true that anything was sent down in Babil to any supposed angels called Haruth and Maruth who whenever they taught sorcery to anyone did so by cautioning, "We are here but to try your faith. So, why do you fall into disbelief?"

This means that sorcery was so evil a craft that even those who taught it used to admit that it is contrary to godliness. Nevertheless, people used to learn things of sorcery, especially that which was supposed to cause a rift between husband and wife, although no such

thing could ever cause anyone any injury whatsoever, unless of course, God so wished it. Anyway, these people, forgetful of the teaching of the Book, have learnt only what harmeth and not what profiteth. It is not that they are unaware of the commandments of God. They know full well that who so barters his faith for sorcery shall have no share in the blessings of the Hereafter. So woe on this their traffic. What a vile thing have they purchased at the cost of their salvation! Would that they know it!

إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ فِتْنَةٌ فَلَا تَكْفُرْ ط
فَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مِنْهُمَا مَا يُفَرِّقُونَ
بِهِ بَيْنَ الْمَرْءِ وَزَوْجِهِ ط وَمَا هُمْ
بِضَارِّينَ بِهِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ
اللَّهِ ط وَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مَا يَضُرُّهُمْ وَلَا
يَنْفَعُهُمْ ط وَلَقَدْ عَلِمُوا لَمَنِ اشْتَرَاهُ
مَا لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ خَلَاقٍ قف
وَلَبِئْسَ مَا شَرَوْا بِهِ أَنْفُسَهُمْ ط لَوْ كَانُوا
يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٠٢﴾

[103] Had these people sincerely believed and acted righteously, they would have received from God a good recompense. Would that they knew it!

وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ آمَنُوا وَاتَّقَوْا لَمَثُوبَةٌ مِنْ
عِنْدِ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ ط لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٠٣﴾ ع ١٢

SECTION 13

The followers of the *Qur'ān* are invited to take a lesson from the history of the Israelites and to guard themselves against the pitfalls into which the Israelites fell. The doubts and suspicions which the unbelievers wished to rouse in the minds of the Muslims are here allayed.

[104] O ye Muslims! Whenever you wish to draw the Prophet's attention to you, do not in the manner of the unbelievers utter the dubious word, "Rai-na", which lends itself to a double meaning; on the other hand, utter 'Unzurna'

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقُولُوا رَاعِنَا

وَقُولُوا انظُرْنَا وَاسْمَعُوا ۗ وَلِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿١٠٤﴾

which means "Turn to us", and then listen attentively to whatever he says, and obey him. As for the unbelievers, remember, there shall be a grievous chastisement meted out to them for what they do.

مَّا يَوَدُّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ وَلَا الْمُشْرِكِينَ أَن يُنَزَّلَ عَلَيْكُم مِّنْ خَيْرٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يَخْتَصُّ بِرَحْمَتِهِ مَن يَشَاءُ ۚ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ

[105] Neither the unbelievers among the people of the Book, nor the polytheists like that anything good in the form of Revelation should come down to you from your Lord, and thus desire to keep you off the right track by creating all sorts of doubts in your minds. The law of God does not conform to the vagaries of human desires. He selecteth for His grace whomsoever He will; and unbounded is the grace of God.

The promulgation of one law after another was necessitated under two conditions. Either a situation called for a supersession of an existing law or an existing law had fallen into desuetude or been forgotten and needed to be revived in some form. But the *sunnat* of God or His way is that every new law delivered is an improvement on the previous one. That is the demand of evolution or of the process of perfection.

The *Qur'ān* disapproves of idle disquisition in respect of simple and clear regulations.

مَا نَنسَخْ مِنْ آيَةٍ أَوْ نُنسِهَا نَأْتِ بِخَيْرٍ

[106] For whatever regulation We abrogate or cause to fall into desuetude, We substitute a better one, or one similar to it. So, it should not be

مِنْهَآ أَوْ مِثْلِهَا ۗ أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ
عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١٠٦﴾

a matter for disquiet, if a new law is promulgated.

Knowest thou not that nothing is beyond the power of God to effect. (If He can, for your guidance, issue a regulation once, as circumstances warrant, He can assuredly likewise issue regulations repeatedly.)

أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَهُۥ مُلْكُ
ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۗ وَمَا لَكُم مِّن
دُونِ ٱللَّهِ مِن وَلِىٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ ﴿١٠٧﴾

[107] And then knowest thou not that it is to God that the dominion of the heavens and the earth belongeth and that for you there is no friend or helper save Him?

أَمْ تُرِيدُونَ أَن تَسْـَٔلُوا۟ رَسُولَكُمْ
كَمَا سُئِلَ مُوسَىٰ مِن قَبْلُ ۗ وَمَن
يَتَبَدَّلِ ٱلْكُفْرَ بِٱلْإِيمَٰنِ فَقَدْ
ضَلَّ سَوَآءَ ٱلسَّبِيلِ ﴿١٠٨﴾

[108] Would you put your Prophet the same type of questions which had been in the past put to Moses? (In other words) would you, in the manner of the Israelites adopt obstructionist tactics instead of straightforwardly conforming to the Law of God without indulging in unnessary, disquisition over it. Remember that he who, having once enjoyed the blessing of Faith, turns against it, he hath indeed drifted from the straight path and has lost the prospect of prosperity and success.

Prayer and the payment of the poor-due promote purity of heart and material well-being. Thus the pious and the generous neither grow tired of religion nor let any weakness creep into their collective strength.

وَدَّ كَثِيرٌ مِّنْ أَهْلِ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ لَوْ
يَرُدُّونَكُم مِّنۢ بَعْدِ إِيمَٰنِكُمْ

[109] Remember that a very large section of the people of the Book desire you (Muslims) to return to unbelief after you have believed;

and although the truth has become manifest to them, they wish, out of envy, that you should not remain firm in your faith. So, do not waste your time in wrangling with them, but exercise forgiveness and forbearance, till God's judgment is delivered to make manifest who were in the right and who were in the wrong. Truly God hath power over everything.

كُفَّارًا ۚ حَسَدًا مِّنْ عِندِ أَنفُسِهِم
مِّن بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الْحَقُّ ۖ
فَاعْفُوا وَاصْفَحُوا حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ
بِأَمْرِهِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١٠٩﴾

[110] Observe prayer and pay the poor-rate; and remember that whatever good things you do, the benefits thereof you will find with God. Verily, God seeth all that you do.

وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ ۚ
وَمَا تُقَدِّمُوا لِأَنفُسِكُم مِّنْ
خَيْرٍ تَجِدُوهُ عِندَ اللَّهِ ۗ إِنَّ
اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿١١٠﴾

The *Qur'ān* states that the Truth of God is but one and is meant for all and was indeed given to everyone. But in implementing it, mankind had divided themselves into numerous groups. The *Qur'ān* desires to bring everyone back to the universal and common Truth and thus put an end to all religious strife. And what is this common and universal Truth? It is that success in life or salvation is achieved only through devotion to God and righteous living. It is this law of life which is the religion prescribed by God, and it is this which the *Qur'ān* styles *Al-Islam.*

The Jews used to assert that so long as one was not a member of the Jewish fold, there was no salvation for him. Likewise, the Christians used to assert that so long as one did not enter the Christian fold, there was no salvation for him. On the other hand, the *Qur'ān* asserts that salvation rests entirely on devotion to God and righteous living and not on adherence to any particular group. Every one who is devoted to God and lives righteously will get salvation irrespective of the religious group to which one belongs.

[111] And the Jews say: "None shall enter Paradise unless one is a Jew". In like manner, the Christians say: "None shall enter Paradise unless one is a Christian". Every group thinks that salvation in the Hereafter is exclusively reserved for them, and that unless one gets into their fold, one cannot obtain salvation. O Prophet Such are their ignorant expectations. Tell these people: "If your boast rests in any way on truth, then cite authority".

وَقَالُوا لَن يَدْخُلَ الْجَنَّةَ إِلَّا
مَن كَانَ هُودًا أَوْ نَصَارَىٰ ۗ تِلْكَ
أَمَانِيُّهُمْ ۗ قُلْ هَاتُوا بُرْهَانَكُمْ
إِن كُنتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿١١١﴾

[112] There is no doubt that the path of salvation is always open to all. But that path is one of faith and action and not of groupism. He who sets his face Godward with resignation and does what is right, his reward is with his Lord; "On such no fear shall come, neither shall they grieve".

بَلَىٰ مَنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُ لِلَّهِ وَهُوَ
مُحْسِنٌ فَلَهُ أَجْرُهُ عِندَ رَبِّهِ
وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ
يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿١١٢﴾

SECTION 14

[113] The Jews say: "The Christians have nothing to lean on". "On nothing lean the Jews", say the Christians, although both read their scripture, and the basis of religion for them both is but the same. Likewise, in similar words say they also, the polytheists of Arabia, who have no knowledge of the sacred scriptures. Even they think that their way of life is the way of truth. Well! On the day of Resurrection, God will

وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ لَيْسَتِ النَّصَارَىٰ
عَلَىٰ شَيْءٍ وَقَالَتِ النَّصَارَىٰ لَيْسَتِ
الْيَهُودُ عَلَىٰ شَيْءٍ وَهُمْ يَتْلُونَ
الْكِتَابَ ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ قَالَ الَّذِينَ لَا
يَعْلَمُونَ مِثْلَ قَوْلِهِمْ ۚ فَاللَّهُ

judge between them as to that in which they differed.

يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ فِيمَا كَانُوْا فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿١١٣﴾

Group fanaticism has increased to such an extent that each group maintains its own places of worship, and denies admission to them to those belonging to other groups. Every group desires to destroy the places of worship belonging to others, although all the groups claim to be devotees of God, and God is the God of all. The *Qur'ān* points out that God is not confined within the four walls of any particular place of worship that one may seek Him in prayer there only and nowhere else. He accepts sincere prayer irrespective of the place where it is offered.

[114] And think over! Who committeth a greater wrong than he who hinders God's name from being taken in His places of prayer and attempts to ruin them? It is not for such as these to enter therein save in fear of God. Remember that for such people there is disgrace in this world and a severe chastisement in the next.

وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ مَّنَعَ مَسٰجِدَ اللّٰهِ أَنْ يُّذْكَرَ فِيهَا اسْمُهٗ وَسَعٰى فِي خَرَابِهَا ۚ أُولٰٓئِكَ مَا كَانَ لَهُمْ أَنْ يَّدْخُلُوهَآ إِلَّا خَآئِفِينَ ۚ لَهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا خِزْيٌ وَّلَهُمْ فِي الْاٰخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١١٤﴾

[115] And note! Whether it is the East or the West, it is all God's. The worship of Him is not conditioned by any place or direction. Whichever side you turn to God, turns He to you. Without doubt God is Omnipresent and Omniscient.

وَلِلّٰهِ الْمَشْرِقُ وَالْمَغْرِبُ ۚ فَأَيْنَمَا تُوَلُّوا فَثَمَّ وَجْهُ اللّٰهِ ۚ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١١٥﴾

The error into which the Christians had fallen was that having disregarded the teachings of their Scripture, they rested their Church on the doctrine of Christ's Sonship of God.

[116] And look at the Christians! They say that God has taken to Himself a son

وَقَالُوا اتَّخَذَ اللّٰهُ وَلَدًا ۙ سُبْحٰنَهٗ

to redeem humanity of their original sin, although God is too transcendent to need a son. Truly, whatever is in the heavens and in the earth is all His, and all submit to Him.

بَلْ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۖ كُلٌّ لَهُ قَانِتُونَ ﴿١١٦﴾

[117] He is the projector of the heavens and the earth. Whenever He intendeth a thing, He doth not need any assistance from any one to put His intention into action. He simply sayeth "Be", and forthwith, "It is".

بَدِيعُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۖ وَإِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ ﴿١١٧﴾

Man's attitude towards truth and error has always remained the same, so much so, that whenever he has expressed himself against truth, he has always adopted the same style and raised the same slogans against it. This is exactly what the Arab polytheists did in the time of the Prophet.

[118] And they who have no knowledge of the sacred scriptures, as for example the polytheists of Arabia, say: "If this teaching is from God, why is it that God speaketh not direct to us or why is it that He doth not send some wonderful token to us. Mark! What these people say is exactly what had already been said by those who had gone before them. Like minds are they. Any way, if these people are really after tokens, they will have, in the first instance, to develop the talent to recognise tokens. We have indeed sent many a clear token for a people of firm faith.

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ لَوْلَا يُكَلِّمُنَا اللّٰهُ أَوْ تَأْتِينَا آيَةٌ ۗ كَذٰلِكَ قَالَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ مِثْلَ قَوْلِهِمْ ۘ تَشَابَهَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ ۗ قَدْ بَيَّنَّا الْآيٰتِ لِقَوْمٍ يُوقِنُونَ ﴿١١٨﴾

For a people who can recognise truth, the greatest token is the very character of the Prophet's teaching and the life he lived. It is against the law of life, or the way of God to furnish miracles to suit the fantasies of the ignorant.

[119] O Prophet! This is an undoubted fact that We have sent thee for the guidance of men, and We have sent thee to announce to them the tidings of the blessings which follow faith and action, and to warn them against the consequences which inevitably follow the rejection of Truth. Your call is clearly a call for devotion to God and righteous living. So, if those who ask for tokens are really in search of Truth, they should indeed know that there could be no higher token than the call of your mission. You are not responsible before God for the behaviour of those who through sheer perversity qualify themselves for Hell. Your function is but to announce to them the message of Truth.

إِنَّآ أَرْسَلْنَٰكَ بِٱلْحَقِّ بَشِيرًا وَنَذِيرًا ۖ وَلَا تُسْـَٔلُ عَنْ أَصْحَٰبِ ٱلْجَحِيمِ ﴿١١٩﴾

The various groups into which men have resolved themselves —Jews, Christians and so forth—are all creations of human perversity.

Divine guidance follows but one straight path. He who follows it will be the rightly-guided, whether or not he is a formal member of any of these groups.

Group formation engenders the spirit of exclusivism among its members and discourages love of truth and search for

reality. Few pay regard to what one believes or how one lives. Attention is paid only to one thing—the group to which a man belongs. When such is their disposition, no argument, however true, will be of any avail. However good and sensible your beliefs and deeds, or however these are in conformity with their own approved teachings, the Jews and the Christians will not be pleased with you, unless you are a member of their fold.

وَلَن تَرْضَىٰ عَنكَ الْيَهُودُ وَلَا
النَّصَارَىٰ حَتَّىٰ تَتَّبِعَ مِلَّتَهُمْ قُلْ
إِنَّ هُدَى اللَّهِ هُوَ الْهُدَىٰ وَلَئِنِ
اتَّبَعْتَ أَهْوَاءَهُم بَعْدَ الَّذِي
جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ مَا لَكَ مِنَ
اللَّهِ مِن وَلِيٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ ﴿١٢٠﴾

[120] And the fact is that however convincing the tokens of truth that you might offer, never will the Jews or the Christians be pleased with thee. They will be pleased with thee only when thou follow their creed, since nothing is religion with them except their own exclusive groupism. Tell them frankly that the path of divine guidance is the only real path of guidance to follow and none of their fancied creeds. And remember, that if, notwithstanding the light of knowledge and conviction that hath dawned on thee, thou shouldst yield to their desires, thou wilt be regarded as having turned away from the divine guidance. And then, thou wilt be denied the friendship and protection of God.

الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ يَتْلُونَهُ
حَقَّ تِلَاوَتِهِ أُولَٰئِكَ يُؤْمِنُونَ
بِهِ وَمَن يَكْفُرْ بِهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ

[121] Among the people of the Book there are some who read the Book with sincerity. They are the people who have the talent to accept the truth. But those among them who disregard it are the ones of whom no hope of reform can be enter-

tained. These are the people who stand to lose.

هُمُ الْخٰسِرُوْنَ ﴿١٢١﴾

SECTION 15

[122] O children of Israel! remember my favours wherewith I favoured you and how I chose you before all others.

يٰبَنِيْٓ اِسْرَآءِيْلَ اذْكُرُوْا نِعْمَتِيَ الَّتِيْٓ اَنْعَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَاَنِّيْ فَضَّلْتُكُمْ عَلَى الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿١٢٢﴾

[123] And mind you the Day which is bound to come when every one will have to come face to face with the results of his deeds. On that day, none shall awail another even slightly, even when one's ancestors or leaders are invoked, nor shall any form of compensation be accepted for the misdeeds committed, nor shall any intercession profit, nor shall any transgressor be succoured.

وَاتَّقُوْا يَوْمًا لَّا تَجْزِيْ نَفْسٌ عَنْ نَّفْسٍ شَيْـًٔا وَّلَا يُقْبَلُ مِنْهَا [illegible] وَّلَا هُمْ يُنْصَرُوْنَ ﴿١٢٣﴾

The ordeal of the Prophet Abraham—the conferment on him of leadership—call to the way of God—construction of the Ka'aba—prayer for the rise of a body of people resigned to God. A reference to these was meant to draw attention to four distinct aspects of the prophetic mission:

(*i*) The personality of Abraham had an equal significance for all the three groups of people who inhabited the Arab Peninsula—the Jews, the Christians and the polytheist Arabs.

His mission had thus a meaning for all the three groups alike.

(*ii*) Abraham's mission gave a direct lie to the religious groupism practised by the three sections. It is evident from history that his people resolved themselves

into three contending groups only after him. The question at issue was this: What was Abraham's way of life?. Certainly it was not groupism. The *Qur'ān*, therefore, invites every one of the three groups to the way of Abraham.

(*iii*) The arrogance of the Jews was the result of their racial pride. They believed that they were the progeny of Abraham and it was they whom God had blessed in the *Torah*. The fact is that this blessing was to be shared by the descendants of his son Ismail, settled down in Arabia along with the descendants of Isaac, another son of Abraham, who composed the Jews. So, what mattered was not the privilege of lineage as good life, since the dispensation of divine blessing was meant only for those who lived aright, and certainly not for the wicked. For those who had given up the way of faith and righteousness, racial distinction of every kind was of no avail.

(*iv*) The lapse into which the earlier communities had fallen called for the raising of another set of people who would serve the cause of truth by their adherence to the way of Abraham, and to them was now entrusted the task of offering divine guidance to the world at large through the *Qur'ān*. It was therefore necessary for the *Qur'ān* to disclose the inner history of the divine mission. Hence it is that the *Qur'ān* refers in the following passage to the construction of the House of prayer, the Ka'aba at Mecca, by Abraham, and to the memorable prayer he said there.

[124] And call to mind the occasion when his Lord tested Abraham in certain things, and he stood the test. On that occasion, God expressed, "O Abraham! I am going to make thee the leader of man-

وَإِذِ ابْتَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ رَبُّهُ
بِكَلِمَاتٍ فَأَتَمَّهُنَّ ۖ قَالَ
إِنِّي جَاعِلُكَ

لِلنَّاسِ إِمَامًا ۖ قَالَ وَمِن ذُرِّيَّتِي ۖ قَالَ لَا يَنَالُ عَهْدِي الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿١٢٤﴾

kind. The generations to come will respond to thy call and walk in thy footsteps." Asked Abraham: "What is thy decision in regard to my descendants?" God answered, "My promise does not extend to such of them as follow the path of sin and injustice".

وَإِذْ جَعَلْنَا الْبَيْتَ مَثَابَةً لِّلنَّاسِ وَأَمْنًا وَاتَّخِذُوا مِن مَّقَامِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ مُصَلًّى ۖ وَعَهِدْنَا إِلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ أَن طَهِّرَا بَيْتِيَ لِلطَّائِفِينَ وَالْعَاكِفِينَ وَالرُّكَّعِ السُّجُودِ ﴿١٢٥﴾

[125] And call to mind the occasion when We declared the House at Mecca, the Ka'aba, to be a place of frequent assemblage for mankind and a sanctuary, and ordered, "Make the spot where Abraham used to stand a station of prayer for all times". And We also commanded Abraham and Ismail that the House which had been raised in Our name, should be kept clean for those who go the rounds there and those who sequester themselves therein for devotional purposes, and those who resort to it for daily prayers and not to defile the sanctity of its presincts by any wrongful activities therein.

وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ هَٰذَا بَلَدًا آمِنًا وَارْزُقْ أَهْلَهُ مِنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ مَنْ آمَنَ مِنْهُم بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ۖ قَالَ وَمَن

[126] And call to mind the time when Abraham prayed to God, "O Lord! make this place, which is far away from prosperous regions of the world and is wholly bereft of greenery, a city of peace and, through thy grace provide fruits to those of its people who believe in God and the Day Hereafter." God answered: "Thy prayer is granted. But to him from among the people who believeth not will I extend my bounty for a while,

although thereafter will I draw him, as a recompense for misdeeds, to the chastisement of Fire—and what an ill abode is his destination."

كَفَرَ فَأُمَتِّعُهُ قَلِيلًا ثُمَّ أَضْطَرُّهُ
إِلَىٰ عَذَابِ النَّارِ ۖ وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيرُ ﴿١٢٦﴾

[127] And then what a grand and inspiring moment it was when raising the foundations of the Ka'aba, Abraham along with Ismail prayed, "Our Lord! accept this from us, for, thou alone can'st accept prayer and thou alone art the Knower of the working of this World.

وَإِذْ يَرْفَعُ إِبْرٰهِيمُ الْقَوَاعِدَ مِنَ
الْبَيْتِ وَإِسْمٰعِيلُ ۖ رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ
مِنَّا ۖ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿١٢٧﴾

[128] "Our Lord! Make us also, through thy grace, truly resigned to Thee, and raise from among our progeny a body of people truly devoted to Thee, and instruct us in the ways of true devotion and overlook our faults. Undoubtedly Thou alone, in Thy graciousness, wilt overlook our faults. Truly there is no limit to Thy relentence!

رَبَّنَا وَاجْعَلْنَا مُسْلِمَيْنِ لَكَ
وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِنَا أُمَّةً مُسْلِمَةً لَكَ
وَأَرِنَا مَنَاسِكَنَا وَتُبْ عَلَيْنَا ۖ
إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٢٨﴾

[129] "Our Lord! Raise up through Thy grace among the people of this city, an apostle who may recite to them Thy revelations and instruct them in the Book and the purposes underlying it and through his prophetic training purify their hearts. Our Lord! Undoubtedly Thou alone art the wise, the Mighty".

رَبَّنَا وَابْعَثْ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا
مِنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيٰتِكَ
وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتٰبَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ
وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ ۚ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ
الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿١٢٩﴾ ع ١٥

SECTION 16

What was the path of religion which Abraham adopted for himself and what was the path which his children followed;

and what was the religion or way of life which Jacob bequeathed from his death-bed to his people? Assuredly, it was not the groupism upheld by Judaism or Christianity. What was enjoined on them was that natural and universal truth which called upon man to believe in God and to owe sincere allegiance to the law of goodly life laid down by Him. It is this way of life which the *Qur'ān* offers. For this reason, the religion enjoined by God is styled *Al-Islam* which means submission to God attainable only when, rising above all forms of affiliations and groupism, one utterly resigns to Him.

[130] This is the way of Abraham. Is there any one that turneth away from the way of Abraham except one who deliberately chooseth to fool himself. Assuredly, We have chosen him for distinction in this world and indeed he will be among the righteous in the world to come.

وَمَنْ يَّرْغَبُ عَنْ مِّلَّةِ اِبْرٰهٖمَ
اِلَّا مَنْ سَفِهَ نَفْسَهٗ ؕ وَلَقَدِ
اصْطَفَيْنٰهُ فِى الدُّنْيَا ۚ وَاِنَّهٗ
فِى الْاٰخِرَةِ لَمِنَ الصّٰلِحِيْنَ ﴿١٣٠﴾

[131] When his Lord said to him, "Resign thyself to Me," he said, "I do resign myself to the Lord of all Being."

اِذْ قَالَ لَهٗ رَبُّهٗۤ اَسْلِمْ ۙ قَالَ
اَسْلَمْتُ لِرَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿١٣١﴾

[132] These were words that Abraham said to his children, the words which his grandson Jacob also said to his own: "O my children! Truly, hath God chosen for you this way of life. So do not pass away ere ye be resigned to God."

وَوَصّٰى بِهَاۤ اِبْرٰهٖمُ بَنِيْهِ
وَيَعْقُوْبُ ؕ يٰبَنِىَّ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ اصْطَفٰى
لَكُمُ الدِّيْنَ فَلَا تَمُوْتُنَّ
اِلَّا وَاَنْتُمْ مُّسْلِمُوْنَ ﴿١٣٢﴾

[133] And then, were ye present with Jacob when death approached him and when he said to his sons, "Whom will you serve when I am gone?" They replied, "We will serve thy God, the God of thy fathers, Abraham,

اَمْ كُنْتُمْ شُهَدَآءَ
اِذْ حَضَرَ يَعْقُوْبَ الْمَوْتُ ۙ
اِذْ قَالَ لِبَنِيْهِ مَا تَعْبُدُوْنَ
مِنْۢ بَعْدِىْ ؕ قَالُوْا نَعْبُدُ

Ishmael and Isaac, God, the One; and to Him are we resigned."

إِلٰهَكَ وَإِلٰهَ آبَائِكَ إِبْرٰهٖمَ وَإِسْمٰعِيلَ وَإِسْحٰقَ إِلٰهًا وَاحِدًا ۚ وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٣٣﴾

The law of God is that it is the result of what one does, be it an individual or a nation, which presents itself before him as his earnings. So neither the good that one does will compensate for the misdeeds of another, nor the evil that one does will have to be accounted for by another.

[134] Anyway, they were an order of people who have passed away. For them, the reward of their deeds and for you, your meed; and you will not be questioned for what they did.

تِلْكَ أُمَّةٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ ۚ لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَلَكُمْ مَّا كَسَبْتُمْ ۚ وَلَا تُسْـَٔلُونَ عَمَّا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٣٤﴾

The love of the past, and the regard for mere tradition have a strong hold over man. He cannot extricate himself from this tangle, and is prone to sanctify every custom and tradition of the past. Anyway the path of guidance is certainly not the path pursued by the sectarians, nor is it the exclusive heritage of any community or group. The true path of guidance is the one which Abraham followed and which, in fact, is the universal divine law of salvation. Every prophet who was ever raised anywhere at any time in the past upheld but this one path, and so a recognition of them all is the way of rectitude. To deny any one of the line of prophets amounts to a denial of the entire line. Whoso differentiaties between apostles or recognises some and denies others does in reality deny the entire line of prophets.

The *Qur'ān* asks the Prophet to announce to the following effect: "I have come to acknowledge the universal truth given to all prophets. Should you be a Jew and believe in the *Torah*, then, I am here to say that your Book is truly from God. I have come to endorse it and revive the truth it contains. Should you be a Christian, do I deny the *Evangel*? I have come to make you act truly on the *Evangel*. If you are a follower

of Abraham, then bear in mind that my mission is wholly his own. If you are a follower of another prophet or of the founder of another religion, then it is not my wish to turn you away from him. I should like you to be more staunchly devoted to Him."

[135] The Jews say: "Become Jews that you may receive guidance"; The Christians say: "Become Christians that you may receive guidance." But you say: "Nay! the universal truth of God cannot be confined to any groupism. The way of truth is that straight way which was the way of Abraham ; and that was to turn away from every man-made plan of life, and to turn devotedly to the natural plan of life ordained by God; and undoubtedly he was not of those who would let anything affect the singleness of his devotion to God.

وَقَالُوْا كُوْنُوْا هُوْدًا اَوْ نَصٰرٰى تَهْتَدُوْا ؕ قُلْ بَلْ مِلَّةَ اِبْرٰهٖمَ حَنِيْفًا ؕ وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ ﴿١٣٥﴾

[136] O Muslims! Declare, "Our way is this: we believe in God and we believe in the *Qur'ān* which has been sent down to us and we believe in all those truths which were imparted to Abraham, Ismail, Jacob and his children. And we believe also in the scriptures which were delivered to Moses and Jesus. Not merely this, but we believe also in all those truths which were revealed to all the prophets of the world by their Lord and we make no distinction between any of

قُوْلُوْٓا اٰمَنَّا بِاللّٰهِ وَمَآ اُنْزِلَ اِلَيْنَا وَمَآ اُنْزِلَ اِلٰٓى اِبْرٰهٖمَ وَاِسْمٰعِيْلَ وَاِسْحٰقَ وَيَعْقُوْبَ وَالْاَسْبَاطِ وَمَآ اُوْتِيَ مُوْسٰى وَعِيْسٰى وَمَآ اُوْتِيَ النَّبِيُّوْنَ مِنْ رَّبِّهِمْ ۚ لَا نُفَرِّقُ

them. We are resigned to God (and will believe in the truth of God revealed anywhere to anyone.)"

بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِّنْهُمْ وَنَحْنُ لَهُ
مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٣٦﴾

[137] So, if they too believe even as you believe, then all dispute is at an end and they are guided aright. But if they turn away, then, take it that there is no hope of their coming round; they are not inclined to seek the truth; they are stubborn. So, avoid them and go your way; and God will suffice thee against them; for He heareth and knoweth everything.

فَإِنْ آمَنُوا بِمِثْلِ مَا آمَنتُم
بِهِ فَقَدِ اهْتَدَوا ۖ وَّإِن
تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّمَا هُمْ فِي شِقَاقٍ ۖ
فَسَيَكْفِيكَهُمُ اللَّهُ ۚ وَهُوَ
السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿١٣٧﴾

[138] Say, "Mere baptism or putting on any colour is not the way to righteousness and salvation, as the Christians think. Along this way, one has really to put on the colour of God; and what colour is better than God's? And it is Him alone that we serve."

صِبْغَةَ اللَّهِ ۖ وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ
مِنَ اللَّهِ صِبْغَةً ۖ وَنَحْنُ
لَهُ عَابِدُونَ ﴿١٣٨﴾

When the God of all is but one and the same and when one is to be judged by one's acts, why all these quarrels in the name of God and religion? Why is the follower of one religion the enemy of the follower of another religion? Why should one hate another?

[139] O Prophet! Say to these people: "Our way is nothing but one of devotion to God. Do you then quarrel with us concerning God? Or do you disapprove of all devotion to God, specially when you are aware that He is our Lord, even as He is your Lord? To us then the result of our deeds, and to you the result

قُلْ أَتُحَاجُّونَنَا فِي اللَّهِ وَهُوَ رَبُّنَا
وَرَبُّكُمْ وَلَنَا أَعْمَالُنَا

of your deeds. For our part, we are but His devoted servants."

وَلَكُمْ أَعْمَالُكُمْ ۚ وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُخْلِصُونَ ﴿١٣٩﴾

Wilful suppression of truth is a heinous sin.

[140] "Or do you, Jews and Christians, contend that Abraham and Ismail and Jacob and his children were Jews or Christians?" O Prophet, ask them: "Who knoweth best, Ye or God? And if it is God, then his evidence is against you, even as recorded in your Book and which you have knowingly suppressed." Now say: "Who is more wicked than he who suppresseth the evidence of God that is in his possession and suppresses it wilfully? And mind, God is not unware of what you do."

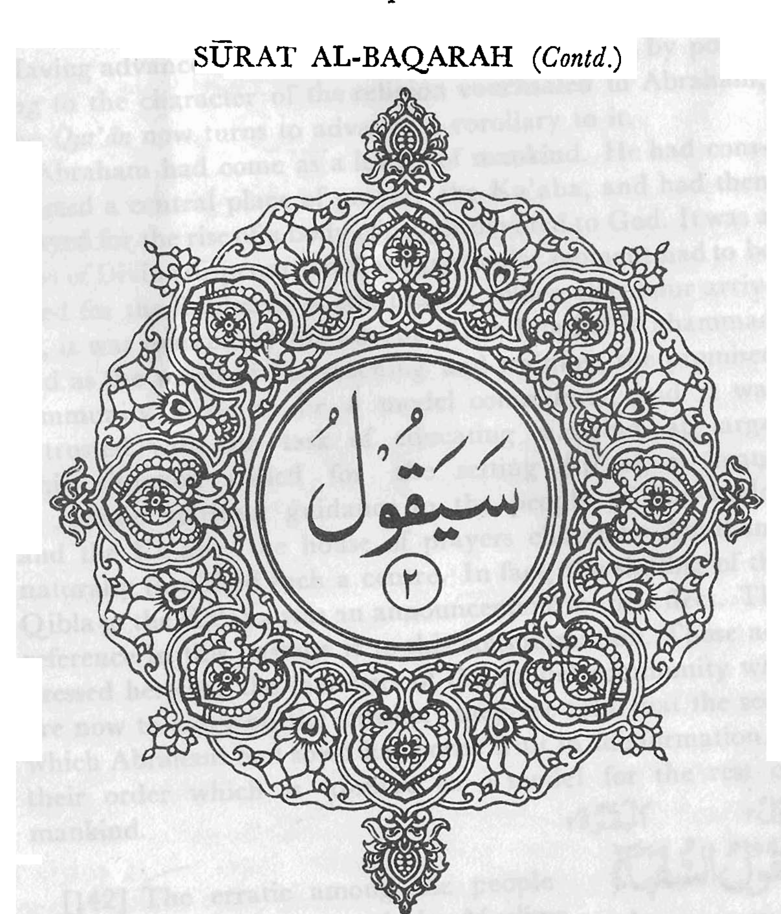
أَمْ تَقُولُونَ إِنَّ إِبْرٰهٖمَ وَإِسْمٰعِيلَ
وَإِسْحٰقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالْأَسْبَاطَ
كَانُوا هُودًا أَوْ نَصٰرٰى ۗ قُلْ ءَأَنْتُمْ
أَعْلَمُ أَمِ اللّٰهُ ۗ وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ
كَتَمَ شَهَادَةً عِنْدَهُ مِنَ اللّٰهِ ۗ
وَمَا اللّٰهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٤٠﴾

[141] Be that as it may, that order of people hath passed away. They have the reward of their deeds, and for you is the meed of yours! And you will not be asked for what they did.

تِلْكَ أُمَّةٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ ۚ لَهَا مَا
كَسَبَتْ وَلَكُمْ مَّا كَسَبْتُمْ ۚ وَلَا
تُسْئَلُونَ عَمَّا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٤١﴾ ع

Chapter II

SŪRAT AL-BAQARAH (*Contd.*)



CHAPTER II

SURAT AL-BAQARAH (*Contd.*)

SECTION 17

Having advanced the idea of the unity of religions by pointing to the character of the religion vouchsafed to Abraham, the *Qur'ān* now turns to advance a corollary to it.

Abraham had come as a leader of mankind. He had constructed a central place of prayer, the Ka'aba, and had then prayed for the rise of a body of people devoted to God. It was a part of Divine dispensation that a particular moment had to be fixed for the fulfilment of this prayer. When that hour arrived, it was marked by the advent of the Prophet Muhammad and as the result of his teaching and training, the promised community arose to be a model community, and it was entrusted with the task of educating mankind at large. This situation called for the setting up of a centre to radiate spiritual guidance to the people of the world, and the Ka'aba, the house of prayers chosen by Abraham, naturally furnished such a centre. In fact, the shifting of the Qibla to the Ka'aba was an announcement to this effect. The reference in this passage is to this consummation. Those addressed here are the members of this model community who are now to carry on the mission; they are told that the seed which Abraham had sown has borne fruit in the formation of their order which is to serve as a model for the rest of mankind.

[142] The erratic among the people will say: "What hath turned the Muslims from the Qibla to which they used to turn for prayer hitherto?" O Prophet! tell them: "The East and the West is God's. He is not circumscribed by any

سَيَقُولُ السُّفَهَاءُ
مِنَ النَّاسِ مَا وَلَّاهُمْ
عَن قِبْلَتِهِمُ الَّتِي كَانُوا
عَلَيْهَا قُل لِّلَّهِ الْمَشْرِقُ

وَالْمَغْرِبُ ۚ يَهْدِي مَن يَشَاءُ إِلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿١٤٢﴾

particular locality or any side. He showeth to whom He will the path of righteousness and success."

وَكَذَٰلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِّتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا ۗ وَمَا جَعَلْنَا الْقِبْلَةَ الَّتِي كُنتَ عَلَيْهَا إِلَّا لِنَعْلَمَ مَن يَتَّبِعُ الرَّسُولَ مِمَّن يَنقَلِبُ عَلَىٰ عَقِبَيْهِ ۚ وَإِن كَانَتْ لَكَبِيرَةً إِلَّا عَلَى الَّذِينَ هَدَى اللَّهُ ۗ وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُضِيعَ إِيمَانَكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِالنَّاسِ لَرَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٤٣﴾

[143] And O Muslims! Even as God hath chosen to shift the Qibla for you from Jerusalem to Mecca, even so, He hath decided to raise you to the position of a model community, so that you might be an example unto others even as the Prophet hath been an example unto you. And if we had allowed you now to continue turning to the Qibla to which you were accustomed to turn for payer, it was only to test you at the right moment who among you will in right obedience turn with the Prophet towards which he would turn to, and who among you through their weakness of faith would not do so. It was certainly an embarrassing situation except for those whom God had guided aright. Anyway, let those who have stood the test feel sure that they will receive very soon the fruit of their steadfastness in faith. God will certainly not let your faith go to waste; for, unto man God is surely most Gracious and Merciful.

قَدْ نَرَىٰ تَقَلُّبَ وَجْهِكَ فِي السَّمَاءِ ۖ فَلَنُوَلِّيَنَّكَ قِبْلَةً تَرْضَاهَا ۚ فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ

[144] O Prophet! We have noticed thee raise up thy face repeatedly towards the heavens in expectation of some message from God. Rest assured, We will have thee turn to a Qibla which thou wilt like. And now that the hour has come for it, turn

then thy face towards the holy mosque (of Abraham) and wherever thou and thy followers be, it will be incumbent on you all to turn your faces towards it in prayer. Indeed, the Jews and the Christians, to whom the Scripture hath been given know well that this is the right thing adjudged by their Lord, even as prophesied therein: And God is not unmindful of what they do.

المسجد الحرام وحيث ما كنتم فولوا وجوهكم شطره ط وإن الذين أوتوا الكتب ليعلمون أنه الحق من ربهم ط وما الله بغافل عما يعملون ١٤٤

The objections raised by the Jews and the Christians to the shifting of the Qibla was the outcome of their racial and sectarian prejudices. Were they ever mindful of truth, they would not have wrangled over it themselves—the Jews declining to recognise the Qibla of the Christians, and vice-versa. When this is the case, it is for the adherents of Truth to remain unperturbed by what erring people say or do; for it is not possible to agree with those who have definitely refused to conform to the right way.

[145] And even shouldst thou advance every kind of justification before the people of the Book, they will not accept thy Qibla. Nor will thou accept their Qibla against common sense and the knowledge of what was right, nor will one group of them accept the Qibla of the other. Shouldst thou ever follow their fancies, despite the knowledge that hath come to thee, then, verily would thou be of the deviators.

ولئن أتيت الذين أوتوا الكتب بكل آية ما تبعوا قبلتك ج وما أنت بتابع قبلتهم ج وما بعضهم بتابع قبلة بعض ط ولئن اتبعت أهواءهم من بعد ما جاءك من العلم لا إنك إذا لمن الظلمين ١٤٥

[146] They to whom We have

الذين آتينهم الكتب يعرفونه

delivered the Scripture know the Prophet of Islam as intimately as they know their own children. Yet there is a body of people among them who knowingly hide the truth about him.

كَمَا يَعْرِفُونَ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ ۖ وَإِنَّ فَرِيقًا مِّنْهُمْ لَيَكْتُمُونَ الْحَقَّ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٤٦﴾

[147] Rest assured that what issueth forth from thy Lord is the truth; and truth is self-evident. Be not then of those who doubt it.

الْحَقُّ مِن رَّبِّكَ ۖ فَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمُمْتَرِينَ ﴿١٤٧﴾

Section 18

After all, the issue of the Qibla is not of the fundamentals of religion, and it cannot be regarded as a determining factor in distinguishing between truth and falsehood. Every group of people chose for themselves a particular direction for prayer. Prayer offered to God by turning one's face in any direction is, on its own merits, devotion to God. It is not conditioned by any such restriction. What primarily matters is righteous living. It is in this endeavour that one should vie with another. That is the real function of piety and devotion to God.

[148] And mark! for every group, there is some side towards which they turn for prayer. (This by itself is not the determining factor in distinguishing between what is true and what is false. The real objective of prayer is righteous living.) So one should strive to vie with another in righteous living. Wherever you are or whatever the direction in which you turn for prayer,

وَلِكُلٍّ وِجْهَةٌ هُوَ مُوَلِّيهَا ۖ فَاسْتَبِقُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ ۚ أَيْنَ مَا تَكُونُوا يَأْتِ بِكُمُ اللَّهُ جَمِيعًا ۚ

God will respond to you. Verily, God hath power over all things.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١٤٨﴾

The general order regarding the Qibla and the purposes underlying it:

[149] (And O Prophet!) From wheresoever thou issueth forth, turn thy face for prayer towards the Holy Mosque, and rest assured that this is the right order issued by thy Lord, and know that God is not unmindful of what you do.

وَمِنْ حَيْثُ خَرَجْتَ فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ
شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ ۖ وَإِنَّهُ
لَلْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ ۗ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ
عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٤٩﴾

[150] And mark that from wheresoever thou issueth forth, turn thy face for prayer towards the Holy Mosque. And O Ye Muslims, wherever ye be, turn your faces too towards it; and remember this (that the emphasis that has been laid on the fixing of the Qibla) is for no other reason than that men should have no ground to dispute with thee and that this be made known that it is Abraham's own house of prayer that is your Qibla. Of course, there are those who have side-tracked the truth. (Their opposition will continue;) but do not mind them. On the other hand, you mind Me! This order has been issued for this reason also that I may complete My favours on you and that you might pursue the right path.

وَمِنْ حَيْثُ خَرَجْتَ فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ
شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ ۚ وَحَيْثُ مَا
كُنْتُمْ فَوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ شَطْرَهُ
لِئَلَّا يَكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَيْكُمْ حُجَّةٌ
إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مِنْهُمْ فَلَا
تَخْشَوْهُمْ وَاخْشَوْنِي وَلِأُتِمَّ
نِعْمَتِي عَلَيْكُمْ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ
تَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٥٠﴾

[151] The favour that We have shown is in keeping with a like favour which We have shown you by choosing from among yourselves an apostle for you who announces to you our directions and through His training reforms you and instructs you in the Book and its purposes and teaches you what hitherto you knew not.

كَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَا فِيكُمْ رَسُولًا مِّنكُمْ يَتْلُوا عَلَيْكُمْ ءَايَٰتِنَا وَيُزَكِّيكُمْ وَيُعَلِّمُكُمُ الْكِتَٰبَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَيُعَلِّمُكُم مَّا لَمْ تَكُونُوا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٥١﴾

The teaching of the Book and of the purposes underlying it— the Prophet's manner of education—the fixing of a central seat of guidance—and the ideal of the model community envisaged—these were the basic factors which had to be provided for to contribute to the development of the order of society promised to be raised in response to the prayer said by Abraham from his house of prayer at Mecca.

When all these stages had been reached, it became necessary to invite the followers of the *Qur'ān* to engage themselves seriously in righteous activity expected of them. That is why the promise issueth forth, "Remember Me and I shall remember you". And since the inevitable corollary to righteous activity was to face, if necessary, trials and tribulations, the call for action was accompanied by a call for patience and persevernce; and it was made clear that this path was beset with inevitable inconveniences. Along with this, certain fundamental principles were also brought to view, by adhering staunchly to which one might avoid the pit-falls and failures of life:

(1) Invest yourselves with the forces generated by prayer and steadfast endurance. True endurance lies in bearing cheerfully the trials of life and refusing to yield to unwholesome desires. True prayer lies in enriching the soul through rememberance of God and contemplation. People among whom these two forces are at work, will never meet with failure.

(2) Death in the way of God is no death: it is life indeed and life eternal. So, eschew every fear of death from your heart.

(3) Attachment to a common centre and the performance of Haj at least once in one's lifetime, health and circumstances permitting.

(4) The propagation of the teachings of the *Qur'ān* is a collective obligation on the part of the followers of the faith. Those who conceal them either through fear or in self-interest deserve divine condemnation.

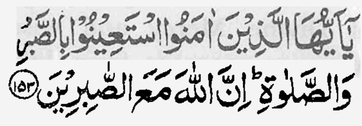
(5) To remain steadfast in devotion to God—to profit by reason and insight—to ponder on the world of creation — to attain gnosis of the reality of things and to draw conclusions from evidences of divine benevolence and graciousness.

[152] So, now keep yourselves engaged in the thought of Me. I too on my part will not remain forgetful of you. Such is My way. So, appreciate My favours and do not turn ungrateful.

فَاذْكُرُونِيٓ أَذْكُرْكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوا لِي وَلَا تَكْفُرُونِ ﴿١٥٢﴾

Section 19

[153] O Muslims! Draw upon the forces proceeding from prayer and steadfast endurance. Be assured that God is with those who endure steadfastly.



[154] And say not of those who are slain in the way of God: "They are dead!" They are alive, although you discern it not.

وَلَا تَقُولُوا لِمَن يُقْتَلُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتٌ ۚ بَلْ أَحْيَاءٌ وَلَٰكِن لَّا تَشْعُرُونَ ﴿١٥٤﴾

[155] And surely will We test you with somewhat of fear and

وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُم بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ

hunger and loss of property and lives and crops. Give tidings of a prosperous and successful life to the steadfast in patience.

وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنفُسِ وَالثَّمَرَاتِ ۗ وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ ﴿١٥٥﴾

[156] These are they, who, when a trouble befalleth them, do not get perturbed. On the other hand, they strengthen the spirit in them by the thought of God, and they say: "Our life and death, our sorrows and worries, our gains and losses,—whatever we have, are all for God; and we are all eventually to return to Him.

الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُم مُّصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ ﴿١٥٦﴾

[157] So, assuredly, it is on such as these that God showers His blessings and it is on such that the grace of God descends. These are they who are to be regarded as truly successful in life.

أُولَٰئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ ۖ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٥٧﴾

[158] Without doubt, Safa and Marwa, are among the sign-posts of Divine Mercy and wisdom. So, whoever proceeds from his home to perform the Haj or the 'Umra', it will be no fault in him if he goes round the two posts, and he who does a good thing of his own accord, then, God surely accords him due recognition; and God knoweth the worth of everything

إِنَّ الصَّفَا وَالْمَرْوَةَ مِن شَعَائِرِ اللَّهِ ۖ فَمَنْ حَجَّ الْبَيْتَ أَوِ اعْتَمَرَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِ أَن يَطَّوَّفَ بِهِمَا ۚ وَمَن تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ شَاكِرٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٥٨﴾

[159] Let those who have developed the habit of concealing, either through fear or in self-interest, things of import, out of what We have sent down in the form of directions and guidance, despite the clear manner in which We have stated them for the people of the Book, know that God metes out to such His displeasure, and know that they also do likewise who are entitled to do so.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْتُمُونَ مَا أَنزَلْنَا
مِنَ الْبَيِّنَٰتِ وَالْهُدَىٰ مِنۢ بَعْدِ
مَا بَيَّنَّٰهُ لِلنَّاسِ فِى الْكِتَٰبِ
أُولَٰٓئِكَ يَلْعَنُهُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَلْعَنُهُمُ
اللَّٰعِنُونَ ﴿١٥٩﴾

[160] But the door of repentance is always open for the sinners. So, let those who have repented and amended and, instead of concealing, proclaimed the truth, know that We accept their repentance, for, We are easily Relenting and Merciful.

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا وَأَصْلَحُوا وَبَيَّنُوا
فَأُولَٰٓئِكَ أَتُوبُ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ وَأَنَا
التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٦٠﴾

[161] Verily, they who disbelieve and die in disbelief, they have now no chance of making amends. On them will rest the malison of God and of the angels and of all mankind.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَمَاتُوا وَهُمْ
كُفَّارٌ أُولَٰٓئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ
وَالْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿١٦١﴾

[162] In that state shall they remain: their torment shall not be lightened, nor will they be given any respite.

خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا ۖ لَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمُ
الْعَذَابُ وَلَا هُمْ يُنظَرُونَ ﴿١٦٢﴾

[163] And bear in mind that your God is God, the One! There is none worthy of worship except He, the Compassionate, the Merciful being who sustains the enitre world of existence.

وَإِلَٰهُكُمْ إِلَٰهٌ وَٰحِدٌ ۖ لَّآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا
هُوَ الرَّحْمَٰنُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٦٣﴾

SECTION 20

[164] Assureldy, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and in the alternation of night and day and in the sailing of the ships through the ocean with what is useful to men, and in the water which God sendeth down from the sky, giving by it life to the earth that was dead, and scattering over it all kinds of animals, and in the movement of the winds, and in the clouds which are marshalled to do service between the heavens and the earth, are signs for the thoughtful.

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ
وَاخْتِلَافِ الَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ وَالْفُلْكِ
الَّتِي تَجْرِي فِي الْبَحْرِ بِمَا يَنْفَعُ
النَّاسَ وَمَآ أَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ
مِنْ مَّاءٍ فَأَحْيَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ
مَوْتِهَا وَبَثَّ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ دَآبَّةٍ
وَتَصْرِيفِ الرِّيٰحِ وَالسَّحَابِ الْمُسَخَّرِ
بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَاٰيٰتٍ
لِّقَوْمٍ يَّعْقِلُوْنَ ﴿١٦٤﴾

Belief in God and the love of God are interdependent; so if one should love any one beside God, then his action amounts to placing another on a level with God, thereby negating one's belief in the unity of God. A true believer in God is he who loves God above all else.

[165] Yet, there are some people who choose, from those beside God, compeers for Him and love them with the love due to God, although they know that there are others, the faithful, whose most intense love is for God alone. Would but the transgressors realise, as they shall have to realise when chastisement

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَّتَّخِذُ مِنْ
دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ أَنْدَادًا يُّحِبُّوْنَهُمْ
كَحُبِّ اللّٰهِ وَالَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْٓا أَشَدُّ
حُبًّا لِّلّٰهِ وَلَوْ يَرَى الَّذِيْنَ ظَلَمُوْٓا

إِذْ يَرَوْنَ الْعَذَابَ أَنَّ الْقُوَّةَ لِلَّهِ
جَمِيعًا وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعَذَابِ ﴿١٦٥﴾

overtakes them, that all power dwells in God alone, and for those who run counter to the laws of God, the chastisement of God is severe.

Regretful results of following false religious leaders—the ruin of communities in the past was largely attributable to allegiance to false leadership. Beware of such allegiance, lest ye share the same fate.

إِذْ تَبَرَّأَ الَّذِينَ اتُّبِعُوا مِنَ
الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوا وَرَأَوُا الْعَذَابَ
وَتَقَطَّعَتْ بِهِمُ الْأَسْبَابُ ﴿١٦٦﴾

[166] And note that, when the false leaders, instead of pleading for their followers, will come forward to disown them, now that they are to undergo the ordeal of chastisement, and when all bonds between them will have thus severed and none will be in a position to think of another or help each other,

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوا لَوْ أَنَّ لَنَا كَرَّةً
فَنَتَبَرَّأَ مِنْهُمْ كَمَا تَبَرَّءُوا مِنَّا ۗ
كَذَٰلِكَ يُرِيهِمُ اللَّهُ أَعْمَالَهُمْ حَسَرَاتٍ عَلَيْهِمْ ۖ
وَمَا هُمْ بِخَارِجِينَ مِنَ النَّارِ ﴿١٦٧﴾

[167] Those that were misled will cry out: "Would that we were given a chance to live over again, that we might disown these false leaders, even as they are disowning us." Thus doth God turn their deeds into vain regrets and they shall not come forth from out of the Fire.

Section 21

The fundamental principles explained, reference is now made to certain subsidiary regulations of life in respect of which a variety of misconceptions had prevailed to an extent that

they were encroaching upon the basic truths of the religion of Islam. Although this may form only a side issue, it has, in its implication and its detailed exposition, the force of a fundamental principle.

Among the misconceptions universally held, the one to which special attention is drawn is in respect of what was permissible in food and drink. Meaningless restrictions had come to be imposed and the test of piety lay in the extent of superstition displayed in this matter. Progress or a free growth for such superstitious people was evidently not possible. This fact as well as the steps taken to set things aright is referred to here in the *Qur'ān:*

(1) In the first place, it was announced by the *Qur'ān* that it was open to man to make use, free of restrictions, of all the good things of life provided on the earth. Meaningless or self-imposed restrictions were clearly Satan-inspired.

(2) Incidentally, the *Qur'ān* draws attention to the truth that the way of faith was the way of reason and insight; and the peculiarity of *Kufr* or negation of faith was blind imitation and lack of insight. Blind imitation, senseless adherence to mere tradition and the citing of elders and leaders against fact and reason are indeed great obstacles in the way of right thought and living. To call upon imitators to pay heed to the demands of knowledge and reason is like addressing animals.

(3) Barring the four things mentioned in the Qur'ānic passage here, the flesh of animals normally used for food is permissible.

(4) The observance of a number of restrictions by the people of the Book in the matter of food was due to the fact that the directions given in the Book and the practice of its early followers had fallen into neglect. Their religious leaders in self-interest either altered the directions or did not disclose them and the masses followed them blindly.

The Book of God is the store-house of knowledge and truth and, any deviation from the truth is prompted by ignorance and doubt. So, when knowledge and truth are brought to view, differences should no longer be entertained. If, even after the advent of the Book of God, people indulge in differences and break the unity of faith by splitting into sects, then, they have indeed drifted far away from the truth with no hope of retracing their steps.

(5) The supreme doctrinal principle of Islam is that the way to perfection and salvation does not lie in observing any particular form of prayer or in observing any restrictions in the matter of food and drink. On the other hand, perfection is attainable only through sincere devotion to God, purity of mind and a life of righteous actions. The regulations of *Shar'a* touching outward observances have their own value in this regard.

The religious misconception which prevailed universally at the advent of the *Qur'ān* was that religion was identical with ritual and the externalia of *Shar'a* or Cannon law, and that salvation and perfection depended on their observance. But the *Qur'ān* says that religion in reality is devotion to God and righteous activity and that the outward observances of the *Shar'a* are also there to promote this purpose. So what primarily matters in religion is the objective and not the means.

[168] O ye mankind! eat freely of the permissible and wholesome things of food which have been provided on the earth. And the fancied restrictions which these people had imposed on themselves are Satan-inspired. So do not follow the ways of Satan, for he is your avowed enemy

يَاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ كُلُوْا مِمَّا فِي الْاَرْضِ حَلٰلًا طَيِّبًا ۖ وَّلَا تَتَّبِعُوْا خُطُوٰتِ الشَّيْطٰنِ ۭ اِنَّهٗ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِيْنٌ ﴿١٦٨﴾

[169] He prompts you only to evil and indecency and makes you aver of God, that of which you have no knowledge.

إِنَّمَا يَأْمُرُكُم بِالسُّوٓءِ وَالْفَحْشَآءِ
وَأَن تَقُولُوا عَلَى اللّٰهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٦٩﴾

[170] And when it is said to them, "Follow ye what God hath sent down" they say, "Nay! We shall follow the way whereon we found our fathers". What! even when you know they were not able to understand anything, or were not on the right path?

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ اتَّبِعُوا مَآ أَنزَلَ
اللّٰهُ قَالُوا بَلْ نَتَّبِعُ مَآ أَلْفَيْنَا عَلَيْهِ
ءَابَآءَنَا ؕ أَوَلَوْ كَانَ ءَابَآؤُهُمْ
لَا يَعْقِلُونَ شَيْـًٔا وَلَا
يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٧٠﴾

[171] And the fact is that those who refuse to believe, resemble in their blind imitation and against the call of reason and guidance, those (sheep), who, when the shepherd calls them catch nothing but the note of the call and the cry. Deaf, dumb, blind are they. So they will never understand.

وَمَثَلُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا كَمَثَلِ
الَّذِي يَنْعِقُ بِمَا لَا يَسْمَعُ إِلَّا دُعَآءً
وَنِدَآءً ؕ صُمٌّۢ بُكْمٌ عُمْىٌ
فَهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٧١﴾

[172] O Muslims! If it is God that you serve and think that in the matter of food, permissible or otherwise, His order is the only order to obey, then freely eat of the wholesome things with which He hath provided you and give Him thanks.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُلُوا مِن
طَيِّبَٰتِ مَا رَزَقْنَٰكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوا لِلّٰهِ
إِن كُنتُمْ إِيَّاهُ تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿١٧٢﴾

[173] What God hath forbidden you are just these—carrion, blood and swine's flesh and that over which any name other than that of God hath been invoked. But he, who of sheer necessity, is driven to partake of them,

إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةَ وَالدَّمَ
وَلَحْمَ الْخِنزِيرِ وَمَآ أُهِلَّ بِهِۦ
لِغَيْرِ اللّٰهِ ۖ فَمَنِ اضْطُرَّ غَيْرَ بَاغٍ

وَّلَا عَادٍ فَلَآ اِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ ۭ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿١٧٣﴾

neither in any inordinate quantity nor in disregard of the regulations of the *Shar'a*, no sin shall be upon him. Without doubt God overlooks shortcomings and in every situation proves merciful to you.

اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ يَكْتُمُوْنَ مَآ اَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ مِنَ الْكِتٰبِ وَيَشْتَرُوْنَ بِهٖ ثَمَنًا قَلِيْلًا ۙ اُولٰۗىِٕكَ مَا يَاْكُلُوْنَ فِيْ بُطُوْنِهِمْ اِلَّا النَّارَ وَلَا يُكَلِّمُهُمُ اللّٰهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ وَلَا يُزَكِّيْهِمْ ښ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ اَلِيْمٌ ﴿١٧٤﴾

[174] Verily, those who hide that which God hath revealed in the Book and exchange it for a mean price—these really put into their bellies nothing but fire; for, these earnings of their's will one day turn, for their punishment, into flames of fire. On the day of Resurrection, God will neither speak to them nor will He reform them; and their's shall be a grievous chastisement.

اُولٰۗىِٕكَ الَّذِيْنَ اشْتَرَوُا الضَّلٰلَةَ بِالْهُدٰى وَالْعَذَابَ بِالْمَغْفِرَةِ ۚ فَمَآ اَصْبَرَھُمْ عَلَي النَّارِ ﴿١٧٥﴾

[175] These are they who have bartered guidance for error and pardon for torment. What a behaviour along the path of error! How reconciled are they to Fire!

ذٰلِكَ بِاَنَّ اللّٰهَ نَزَّلَ الْكِتٰبَ بِالْحَقِّ ۭ وَاِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ اخْتَلَفُوْا

[176] All this, despite the fact that God hath sent down the Book (*Torah*) with Truth. Normally, when the light of revelation has dawned, every form of human doubt or suspicion should have been dispelled. Nevertheless, these people fell at variance. And they who

have differed in their approach to the directions of the Book of God, have indeed drifted away from it, splitting into sects.

فِي الْكِتٰبِ لَفِيْ شِقَاقٍ بَعِيْدٍ ﴿۱۷۶﴾

SECTION 22

[177] Piety does not lie in turning your faces in prayer towards the East or the West, or in observing any such outward formality; but true piety is this that one believeth in God, in the Last Day, in the angels, in the scriptures, and in all the messengers of God, and for the love of Him giveth of his wealth to his kindred and to the orphans, and to the needy, and to the way-farer, and to those who ask, and for the uplift of the downtrodden, and observeth prayer and payeth the poor-rate and is of those who are faithful to their engagements when they have engaged in them, and endure with fortitude poverty, distress and moments of peril. Such undoubtedly are they who are true in their faith, and such are they who are truly pious.

لَيْسَ الْبِرَّ اَنْ تُوَلُّوْا وُجُوْهَكُمْ
قِبَلَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ وَلٰكِنَّ
الْبِرَّ مَنْ اٰمَنَ بِاللّٰهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْاٰخِرِ
وَالْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ وَالْكِتٰبِ وَالنَّبِيّٖنَ ۚ وَاٰتَى
الْمَالَ عَلٰى حُبِّهٖ ذَوِي الْقُرْبٰى وَ
الْيَتٰمٰى وَالْمَسٰكِيْنَ وَابْنَ
السَّبِيْلِ ۙ وَالسَّآئِلِيْنَ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ ۚ
وَاَقَامَ الصَّلٰوةَ وَاٰتَى الزَّكٰوةَ ۚ
وَالْمُوْفُوْنَ بِعَهْدِهِمْ اِذَا عٰهَدُوْا ۚ
وَالصّٰبِرِيْنَ فِي الْبَاْسَآءِ وَالضَّرَّآءِ
وَحِيْنَ الْبَاْسِ ۭ اُولٰٓئِكَ الَّذِيْنَ صَدَقُوْا ۭ
وَاُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْمُتَّقُوْنَ ﴿۱۷۷﴾

The provision of retaliation for man-slaughter and the issues arising therefrom.

(1) Here is a declaration that all men are equals. The *Qur'ān* declares itself against the inequalities introduced in human society. In the scale of human life all are to be treated alike, both men and women. So,

in the matter of retaliation for man-slaughter, life for life is the law, and no distinction or discrimination is permissible.

(2) If the heirs of the slain are willing to accept blood-money, the slayer may save his life.

(3) The principle of life for life is conceived in the interests of life itself. The objective is to protect human life. So, when the objective is to preserve life, it is clear that retaliation is not intended to be merely a means of destruction of life.

[178] O Muslims! Prescribed for you is retaliation for man-slaughter (In this matter, no distinction can be made between man and man.) If the slayer is a free man, only that free man will have to pay the penalty of death. (In deference to the position which the slain had occupied, it will not be permissible to demand the lives of two persons, as was the practice among the Arabs.) If the slayer is a slave, only he, the slayer, will be slain in retaliation. (In view of the fact that the slayer was a slave and the slain was a free man it will not be proper that two slaves should pay the penalty.) If the slayer is a woman, that very woman will have to pay the penalty. And if the heirs of the slain, out of sheer human sympathy, are prepared to forgive the slayer for the deed and are willing to accept blood-money, (then the slayer be set free on payment of this blood-money). In that event,

يَاأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ
الْقِصَاصُ فِي الْقَتْلَى ۖ الْحُرُّ بِالْحُرِّ
وَالْعَبْدُ بِالْعَبْدِ وَالْأُنثَىٰ بِالْأُنثَىٰ ۚ
فَمَنْ عُفِيَ لَهُ مِنْ أَخِيهِ شَيْءٌ
فَاتِّبَاعٌ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَأَدَاءٌ إِلَيْهِ
بِإِحْسَانٍ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ تَخْفِيفٌ مِّن
رَّبِّكُمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ ۗ فَمَنِ

the heirs should ask for nothing beyond the customary blood-money and that the slayer should show liberality in paying it.

اعْتَدَىٰ بَعْدَ ذَٰلِكَ فَلَهُۥ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿١٧٨﴾

(And mark that the arrangement prescribed by the *Qur'ān* is to take off the sting from retaliation, and cleanse it of all its harshness, and make it an instrument of promoting the sense of justice and brotherliness among you.) This is a concession from your Lord and a mercy. For him who shall transgress after this, there shall be a sore chastisement.

[179] And for you, O men of understanding, retaliation, has a meaning for you. Although one life is taken for taking another life, this is not a mere taking of life. In fact, it assures life for you; for it prevents you from all evil.

وَلَكُمْ فِى ٱلْقِصَاصِ حَيَوٰةٌ يَٰٓأُو۟لِى ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٧٩﴾

Making of a 'will' prior to death is recommended and this is in the interest of those left behind. The following are the aspects to be noted:

(1) Although the property owned by one passes after his death into other hands, it is the duty of its owner to think how it should be distributed after him to the advantage of those near and dear to him; and he cannot by any means, divest himself of this responsibility.

(2) The will that a dying man makes is a sacred trust for those who happen to be entrusted with it. It is their duty to execute it according to every detail

(3) Should those who are entrusted with the task of executing it tamper with its provisions, it is they who are accountable, and not the testator or the beneficiaries thereof.

[180] It is prescribed to you that when death approacheth any of you and that he is to leave any wealth behind, he should bequeath equitably to his parents and kindred. This is incumbent on those who are mindful of God.

كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ إِنْ تَرَكَ خَيْرًا ۖۚ الْوَصِيَّةُ لِلْوَالِدَيْنِ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۖ حَقًّا عَلَى الْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١٨٠﴾

[181] But should any change the bequest after hearing it, the sin shall rest on those who change it. (The change should not affect the purpose of the original.) Remember that God heareth and knoweth.

فَمَنْ بَدَّلَهُ بَعْدَ مَا سَمِعَهُ فَإِنَّمَا إِثْمُهُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ يُبَدِّلُونَهُ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٨١﴾

[182] But if any apprehend partiality of any wrong on the part or the testator and reaches in time a settlement with the parties concerned—that shall be no wrong in him; (for, this will not be altering the will but it will be a rectifying of a possible irregularity or injustice.) And without doubt God is the forgiver of shortcomings, the Merciful.

فَمَنْ خَافَ مِنْ مُّوصٍ جَنَفًا أَوْ إِثْمًا فَأَصْلَحَ بَيْنَهُمْ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٨٢﴾ ع

Section 23

The prescription of fast in the month of Ramadhan and the principles underlying it, and the removal of certain misconceptions relating thereto.

There is nothing really good in the mere act of starving or of causing undue exertion or discomfort to the body. That is not the objective of the fast prescribed by the *Qur'an*. The real objective is to lead the mind of man through a process of purification. The process of fasting promotes the sense of restraint and an aptitude for righteous thought and living.

(1) Fasting was reserved for the month of Ramadhan for the simple reason that it was during this month that the revelations of the *Qur'ān* began to be delivered to the Prophet. Incidentally, fasting keeps the memory of this event green in the minds of the faithful.

(2) There should be ease in the observance of religious practices and by no means any hardship. It is not proper to take the view that rigidity or hardship in devotional practices is pleasing to God.

(3) The object of the devotional practices is to purify your mind and heart and give a healthy tone to it. It is not only when you go through lengthy ordeals of physical starvation that you can raise your voice to God, as was the idea prevalent among the religious-minded of the days of the Prophet. God responds to the cry of the needy at all times and in every situation, He being closer to man than even his own jugular vein. If you raise your voice to Him in sincerity and faith, the door of divine mercy instantly opens out for you.

(4) Among the Jews, the conditions of fasting were very rigid and very severe. One was this: Once a Jew went to bed after breaking his fast, he was not allowed to partake of any food, lest he should wake up during the night. Likewise, the Jews were absolutely forbidden all conjugal relations with their wives in the month of fasting. When fasting was prescribed for the Muslims, it was apprehended that these restrictions were also binding on them, and since these restrictions were very trying, some of the followers of the Faith could not conform to them and had necessarily to conceal their

failings. In verse 187 of this chapter, the *Qur'ān* refers to this situation in the following words: "God knew that you were doing injury to your own selves". The purpose of the fast is not to deprive any one of his bodily pleasures but to develop in him the sense of restraint and moderation, in order that he may regulate his desires. The restrictions placed on food and drink and conjugality applied only to the day. During the night one was perfectly free to attend to such needs.

(5) The conjugal relationship between husband and wife is not anything immoral that it should be a matter for prohibition during a month given to devotion to God. It is a natural relationship and the couple is wedded to each other in their common necessities of life. Anything transpiring between them should not in any manner be repugnant to devotion to God.

(6) A believer in God is he whose action is above board. A thing may not be wrong in itself; but if once you deem it so and yet resort to it in secret, then although you have done nothing wrong, you have verily done a wrong to your conscience and soiled the purity of your heart.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ
ٱلصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ
مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٨٣﴾

[183] O Muslims! a course of fasting is prescribed to you as it was prescribed to those before you that you might guard yourselves against your passions.

أَيَّامًا مَّعْدُودَٰتٍ ۚ فَمَن كَانَ مِنكُم
مَّرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ
أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ ۚ وَعَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُۥ

[184] This is only for a specific number of days, (and not for any lengthy period.) For him among you who may be sick or on a journey, permission is given to observe the fast on other days and thus complete the course. As for those who have not the

فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ مِسْكِينٍ ط فَمَنْ
تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّهُ ط وَأَنْ
تَصُومُوا خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ
تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٨٤﴾

capacity to bear the strain of fasting, (as for example very old people who have not the strength to fast, nor could entertain the hope of fasting on other days), for such the substitute is the feeding of an indigent person. And he who of his own accord does more than this, (or feeds more than one), then he shall derive additional reward for what he has done. But if you are a man of understanding, then bear it in mind that to keep fast under every circumstance is good for you.

شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِيٓ أُنْزِلَ فِيهِ
الْقُرْاٰنُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنٰتٍ
مِّنَ الْهُدٰى وَالْفُرْقَانِ ج فَمَنْ
شَهِدَ مِنْكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ ط
وَمَنْ كَانَ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلٰى سَفَرٍ
فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ ط يُرِيدُ اللّٰهُ
بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ ز
وَلِتُكْمِلُوا الْعِدَّةَ وَلِتُكَبِّرُوا اللّٰهَ

[185] It was in the month of Ramadhan that the *Qur'ān* was delivered—a guidance for man, presenting clear signs of guidance, and a criterion enabling him to distinguish between right and wrong. As soon as any of you observeth that the month has begun, let him set about the fast; but he who is sick or on a journey shall fast a like number of other days. God wisheth you ease and wisheth not discomfort. (The concession shown to the sick and those on journey to complete the course on other days is for the reason that the observance of fast for a specific period offers certain benefits to those who fast, and that it is good in their own interests to complete the course on other days.) You should therefore

complete the course (for the sake of your spiritual welfare) and be in a position to extol the greatness of God for showing the way to it and feel grateful to Him.

عَلٰى مَا هَدٰىكُمْ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ
تَشْكُرُوْنَ ﴿۱۸۵﴾

[186] And O Prophet! when any one of my servants ask thee how they could reach Me, tell them that I am ever present with them and that I respond to the call of him that calleth, when he calleth Me; so if they really seek Me, let them hearken unto Me and have faith in Me that they may achieve success in life.

وَاِذَا سَاَلَكَ عِبَادِيْ عَنِّيْ فَاِنِّيْ
قَرِيْبٌ ط اُجِيْبُ دَعْوَةَ
الدَّاعِ اِذَا دَعَانِ
فَلْيَسْتَجِيْبُوْا لِيْ
وَلْيُؤْمِنُوْا بِيْ لَعَلَّهُمْ
يَرْشُدُوْنَ ﴿۱۸۶﴾

[187] You are permitted to approach your wives during the night of the fast. They are your garments and you are their garments. God knew that you were doing injury to your own selves by doing a thing which was in itself not bad but which you were feeling that it was so, and yet you were doing it much against your conscience. God in His mercy did not choose to hold you responsible for it. He took note of your embarrassment and forgave you. Now that the matter is cleared, you may without hesitation go in to your wives with hopes of having what God would like you have, and eat and drink until you see the dark line of the night pass into the bright line of the

اُحِلَّ لَكُمْ لَيْلَةَ الصِّيَامِ الرَّفَثُ
اِلٰى نِسَآئِكُمْ ط هُنَّ لِبَاسٌ لَّكُمْ
وَاَنْتُمْ لِبَاسٌ لَّهُنَّ ط عَلِمَ اللّٰهُ اَنَّكُمْ
كُنْتُمْ تَخْتَانُوْنَ اَنْفُسَكُمْ فَتَابَ
عَلَيْكُمْ وَعَفَا عَنْكُمْ ج
فَالْـٰٔنَ بَاشِرُوْهُنَّ
وَابْتَغُوْا مَا كَتَبَ اللّٰهُ
لَكُمْ ص وَكُلُوْا وَاشْرَبُوْا حَتّٰى يَتَبَيَّنَ

dawn, and then go through the fast till the night sets in. And go not in to your wives while you have sequestered yourselves in the mosques. These are the bounds set by God: do not try to cross them. It is in such details that God gives His instructions to men that they might guard themselves against transgression.

لَكُمُ الْخَيْطُ الْأَبْيَضُ مِنَ الْخَيْطِ الْأَسْوَدِ مِنَ الْفَجْرِ ثُمَّ أَتِمُّوا الصِّيَامَ إِلَى اللَّيْلِ وَلَا تُبَاشِرُوهُنَّ وَأَنْتُمْ عَاكِفُونَ فِي الْمَسَاجِدِ تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ فَلَا تَقْرَبُوهَا كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ آيَاتِهِ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٨٧﴾

This section on the subject of fast in Ramadhan rounds off with an expression of a basic truth about Islamic religious exercises. It points out that ascetic religious practices bring no good to one who is disregardful of the rights of others, or cannot deter oneself from appropriating what belongs to others. Piety does not lie in denying food to yourself for a particular period. On the other hand, piety lies in denying to yourself for all times food in every form obtained through wrong means.

[188] And mark! consume not each other's property by false pretence and present a part of it to judges that you may consume unjustly a part of other men's property, knowing full well that it is wrong to do so.

وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتُدْلُوا بِهَا إِلَى الْحُكَّامِ لِتَأْكُلُوا فَرِيقًا مِنْ أَمْوَالِ النَّاسِ بِالْإِثْمِ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٨٨﴾ ع

Section 24

Here follow the regulations touching the conduct of *Hajj*, the pilgrimage to Mecca, and the removal of certain religious misconceptions prevailing among the Arab and other communities at the advent of the *Qur'ān*.

(1) The appearance of the new moon is taken to mark the months of the year and also to specify the season of *Hajj*. Anything else attributed to this phenomenon is no better than superstition. The superstitious

notions prevailing among the masses in respect of the movements of the stars or of astrology have, in the Islamic view, absolutely no rational foundation. The performance of pilgrimage to shrines and places held sacred is hedged in intricate formalities and pilgrims have to go through a number of physical discomforts. The true path of righteousness is to keep one's inward self or one's mind immune to evil.

(3) The persecution which the followers of the Prophet suffered at the hands of the unbelievers of Mecca precluded free entrance to the Ka'aba. So permissior was granted to fight their way to it; for, it was neces sary to rescue this House of prayer from the clutche of their oppressors.

But the Muslims are cautioned that nothing they dc whether in the state of war or of peace, should g against justice and uprightness.

(4) War is an evil. But disorder is much worse. So it be came imperative to prefer a state of war to a state c disorder in society.

What was the mischief wrought by the Quraish of Mecca? It was to force violently the adherents of Truth to give up their faith, so much so, that freedor of conscience was denied to them. The *Qur'ān* point out that this evil was worse than war. It was therefor necessary to take to war to put an end to his state c affairs.

Permission to fight was given to protect the right c freedom of conscience in order that, in a matte between God and man, the oppressive hand of man should have no chance to intervene.

(5) It was therefore enjoined on the Muslims to sacrifice their belongings or wealth in the cause of this holy struggle by observing that they who abstained from spending their wealth in such a cause truly courted ruin; for, abstention from fighting in a just cause i indeed national death for any people.

(6) Returning to the subject of *Hajj*, the *Qur'ān* advises what one should do when the entry to the House of Prayer is blocked by the enemy.

(7) The *Hajj* begins the moment a Muslim dons the robe of the pilgrim. So from this moment onward till the robe is removed, it is not permissible for a pilgrim to go in to his wife, or to utter any thing indecent, or pick up any quarrel with any one. The best preparation for the performance of a sacred duty is the cultivation of righteousness.

(8) The *Qur'ān* here observes that devotion to God or piety does not conflict with worldly activity or with material progress and prosperity. In fact, Islam desires to promote a perfect living which assures for one the benefits both of this world and of the next. Pilgrimage is just a form of devotion. But as a form of devotion, it does not come in the way of the pilgrim carrying on any transactions which may bring him material good. Wealth or property is after all in the gift of God, and it is but meet on the part of man to seek it wherever he can in an upright manner.

(9) A serious misconception of life has prevailed among people all over the world with the result that they have had recourse to extremes. Either one is so obsessed with the pursuit of worldly living that he has had to neglect absolutely the demands of the life to come, or is so engrossed in the thought of otherworldliness that he has imposed on himself asceticism in all its rigidity. But the right way, as delineated by the *Qur'ān*, is the middle way—the path of moderation in every sphere of life's activity. He alone liveth aright whose one prayer to God is this: "Our Lord! Give us good in this world and give us good in the Hereafter".

[189] They ask thee of the new moons. Say: "They are markings of time for men, and for purposes of pilgrimage. (As

يَسْـَٔلُوْنَكَ عَنِ الْاَهِلَّةِ ۗ قُلْ هِيَ

for the rest, the superstitions entertained of them and the practices of diverse sorts followed in this connection have no rational foundation whatsoever.) There is no goodness, for instance, in entering houses from over their back sides, (as the Arabs used to do on beholding a new moon and putting on the robe of the pilgrim.) Goodness lies in the avoidance of wrong living. Enter the houses then by the proper door and be mindful of God that you might prosper.

مَوَاقِيتُ لِلنَّاسِ وَالْحَجِّ ۗ وَ
الْبِرُّ بِأَنْ تَأْتُوا الْبُيُوتَ مِنْ
ظُهُورِهَا وَلَٰكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنِ
اتَّقَىٰ ۗ وَأْتُوا الْبُيُوتَ مِنْ
أَبْوَابِهَا ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٨٩﴾

[190] And fight in the way of God against those who fight against you, but do not commit excesses. Surely, God does not like those who commit excesses.

وَقَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ
يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ وَلَا تَعْتَدُوا ۚ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ ﴿١٩٠﴾

[191] (The Meccans have declared war against you.) You too declare war against them, and slay them wherever you find them and eject them from wheresoever they have ejected you; for persecution is worse than bloodshed. (As for fighting within the precints of the Ka'aba, the order is this:) attack them not in the vicinity of the Sacred Mosque unless they attack you there; but if they attack you, then you will have to fight them. That is the desert of the persecuting unbelievers.

وَاقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ ثَقِفْتُمُوهُمْ
وَأَخْرِجُوهُمْ مِنْ حَيْثُ أَخْرَجُوكُمْ ۚ
وَالْفِتْنَةُ أَشَدُّ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ ۚ وَلَا
تُقَاتِلُوهُمْ عِنْدَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ
حَتَّىٰ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ فِيهِ ۖ فَإِنْ قَاتَلُوكُمْ
فَاقْتُلُوهُمْ ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ جَزَاءُ الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿١٩١﴾

[192] But if they desist, then, he door of divine forgiveness will ot be closed against them; for

فَإِنِ انْتَهَوْا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿١٩٢﴾

without doubt God is the God of forgiveness, the Merciful!

[193] And fight until there is no more persecution from them, and the way of life prescribed by God prevails. But if they desist, then let there be no more hostility save against the aggressive.

وَقٰتِلُوْهُمْ حَتّٰى لَا تَكُوْنَ فِتْنَةٌ وَّيَكُوْنَ الدِّيْنُ لِلّٰهِ ۭ فَاِنِ انْتَهَوْا فَلَا عُدْوَانَ اِلَّا عَلَى الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿١٩٣﴾

[194] If they treat a sacred month as sacred, then do ye also treat the sacred month as sacred; even in matters sacred, the rule to be observed is like for like. If any be overbearing, then do ye behave as they have behaved, and be mindful of God, and know that God is with those who guard themselves against transgression.

اَلشَّهْرُ الْحَرَامُ بِالشَّهْرِ الْحَرَامِ وَالْحُرُمٰتُ قِصَاصٌ ۭ فَمَنِ اعْتَدٰى عَلَيْكُمْ فَاعْتَدُوْا عَلَيْهِ بِمِثْلِ مَا اعْتَدٰى عَلَيْكُمْ ۠ وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ اَنَّ اللّٰهَ مَعَ الْمُتَّقِيْنَ ﴿١٩٤﴾

[195] And spend in the way of God and do not with your own hands work for your own ruin and do good; for God verily loveth these who do good.

وَاَنْفِقُوْا فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ وَلَا تُلْقُوْا بِاَيْدِيْكُمْ اِلَى التَّهْلُكَةِ ۚ وَاَحْسِنُوْا ۚ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِيْنَ ﴿١٩٥﴾

[196] Perform the *Hajj* and the *Umra* for the sake of God. But if ye be hindered, then send forth whatsoever offering is most easily available, and shave not your heads until the offering has reached its destination. But whoever among you is sick or hath an ailment of the head, he should, in lieu of shaving, fast or give alms or offer sacrifice. And when you are free to move forward, then he who hath performed the *Umra* and *Hajj* together, let his offering be what is the most

وَاَتِمُّوا الْحَجَّ وَالْعُمْرَةَ لِلّٰهِ ۭ فَاِنْ اُحْصِرْتُمْ فَمَا اسْتَيْسَرَ مِنَ الْهَدْيِ ۚ وَلَا تَحْلِقُوْا رُءُوْسَكُمْ حَتّٰى يَبْلُغَ الْهَدْيُ مَحِلَّهٗ ۭ فَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ مَّرِيْضًا اَوْ بِهٖٓ اَذًى مِّنْ رَّاْسِهٖ فَفِدْيَةٌ مِّنْ صِيَامٍ اَوْ صَدَقَةٍ اَوْ نُسُكٍ ۚ فَاِذَآ اَمِنْتُمْ ۪ فَمَنْ تَمَتَّعَ

easily available. But if he findeth nothing to offer, he shall fast three days during the *Hajj* itself, and seven days on return—ten days in all. This is the procedure for him whose family doeth not reside near the sacred mosque; and be mindful of God and know that He is severe in chastisement.

بِالْعُمْرَةِ إِلَى الْحَجِّ فَمَا اسْتَيْسَرَ
مِنَ الْهَدْيِ ۚ فَمَنْ لَّمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ
ثَلٰثَةِ أَيَّامٍ فِي الْحَجِّ وَسَبْعَةٍ إِذَا
رَجَعْتُمْ ۗ تِلْكَ عَشَرَةٌ كَامِلَةٌ ۗ
ذٰلِكَ لِمَنْ لَّمْ يَكُنْ أَهْلُهٗ حَاضِرِي
الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ وَاعْلَمُوٓا
ع أَنَّ اللّٰهَ شَدِيْدُ الْعِقَابِ ﴿١٩٦﴾

Section 2

[197] There are certain months known for pilgrimage. Whoever then undertakes the pilgrimage, let him not yield to sex promptings, or employ the language of abuse, or wrangle during the pilgrimage. And whatever good you do, that God knoweth. And equip yourself for the journey properly, and the best of equipment is righteousness. Be then mindful of God, O men of understanding!

اَلْحَجُّ أَشْهُرٌ مَّعْلُوْمٰتٌ ۚ فَمَنْ
فَرَضَ فِيْهِنَّ الْحَجَّ فَلَا رَفَثَ وَلَا
فُسُوْقَ وَلَا جِدَالَ فِي الْحَجِّ ۗ وَمَا
تَفْعَلُوْا مِنْ خَيْرٍ يَّعْلَمْهُ
اللّٰهُ ۗ وَتَزَوَّدُوْا فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ
الزَّادِ التَّقْوٰى ۚ وَاتَّقُوْنِ يٰٓأُولِي
الْأَلْبَابِ ﴿١٩٧﴾

وقف النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم

[198] It shall be no harm if you seek any material gain from your Lord during the pilgrimage, by carrying on business. So when you hasten back from Arafat, then remember God near the Masha'r al-Harām and remember Him in the manner He hath shown you, although you were hitherto of those who were going astray.

لَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَنْ تَبْتَغُوْا
فَضْلًا مِّنْ رَّبِّكُمْ ۚ فَإِذَا أَفَضْتُمْ
مِّنْ عَرَفٰتٍ فَاذْكُرُوا اللّٰهَ عِنْدَ
الْمَشْعَرِ الْحَرَامِ ۖ وَاذْكُرُوْهُ كَمَا هَدٰىكُمْ ۚ
وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مِّنْ قَبْلِهٖ لَمِنَ الضَّآلِّيْنَ ﴿١٩٨﴾

[199] Then even as others,

pass on quickly from the place where people are to pass quickly, and seek Divine forgiveness for your past behaviour, for, God is Forgiving, Merciful.

ثُمَّ أَفِيضُوا مِنْ حَيْثُ أَفَاضَ النَّاسُ وَاسْتَغْفِرُوا اللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿١٩٩﴾

[200] And when you have finished your rites, extol God even as you used to extol your own fathers previously, or with a more fervent extolling. (This is really the purpose of *Hajj.*) Some there are who out of their love for the things of this world seem to pray of God; "Our Lord! give us prosperity in this world". But such shall have no portion in the life of the Hereafter.

فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُمْ مَنَاسِكَكُمْ فَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَذِكْرِكُمْ آبَاءَكُمْ أَوْ أَشَدَّ ذِكْرًا ۗ فَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَقُولُ رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَمَا لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ خَلَاقٍ ﴿٢٠٠﴾

[201] And some there are who desire prosperity in both the worlds. They say, "Our Lord! give us good in this world and give us good in the world to follow, and protect us from the chastisement of Fire".

وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يَقُولُ رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ ﴿٢٠١﴾

[202] Certainly it is such people that shall have, both in this and the life to come, the meed of what they have earned, and God is not slow in appraising the work of men; He is quick in according recompense for what they have done.

أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ نَصِيبٌ مِمَّا كَسَبُوا ۚ وَاللَّهُ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ ﴿٢٠٢﴾

[203] Extol God during the stated days of the *Hajj.* But if any one, in haste returns in two days, it shall be no blame in him, provided he does this with a reighteous

وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ فِي أَيَّامٍ مَعْدُودَاتٍ ۚ فَمَنْ تَعَجَّلَ فِي يَوْمَيْنِ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ وَمَنْ تَأَخَّرَ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ ۚ لِمَنِ اتَّقَىٰ ۗ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ

purpose. Be midful of God then,
and know that to Him shall ye all
have to repair.

وَاعْلَمُوْٓا اَنَّكُمْ اِلَيْهِ
تُحْشَرُوْنَ ۝٢٠٣

Islam is not opposed to temporal life. What it is opposed to is pride or arrogance born of senseless devotion to worldliness. It is this arrogance or pride which diverts the mind of man from uprightness and the thought of God; and when this is allied to political power, it works havoc in human life, as and when his self-interest or his whim prompts him to do. But they who are truly devoted to God, however pre-occupied in matters of this world, never yield to the temptations of the heart. They are only after the approbation of God for what they do. The man of the world will in his own interest sacrifice the interests of others, but they, the truly devoted to God, sacrifice their own interests to seek the pleasure of God. However much one may try to make worldly life pleasant or claim to possess a kindly disposition, his test is this: what treatment has he meted out to his fellow-beings through the power that he has possessed?

The destruction of life and property wrought by man through his pride and power is to be regarded as the most heinous of wrongs ever done to mankind. If it is ever said to those intoxicated with power, "Fear God", they embolden themselves to commit greater excesses.

[204] Among men there are some who beguile thee by their talk on the life of this world and take God to bear testimony to their sincerity. Yet they are the most zealous in opposition.

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يُّعْجِبُكَ قَوْلُهٗ
فِي الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا وَيُشْهِدُ اللّٰهَ
عَلٰى مَا فِيْ قَلْبِهٖ ۙ وَهُوَ اَلَدُّ الْخِصَامِ ۝٢٠٤

[205] Whenever they get power they engage themselves in creating disorder in the land and lay waste the fields and flocks; and God does not like such disorder.

وَاِذَا تَوَلّٰى سَعٰى فِي الْاَرْضِ
لِيُفْسِدَ فِيْهَا وَيُهْلِكَ
الْحَرْثَ وَالنَّسْلَ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ لَا
يُحِبُّ الْفَسَادَ ۝٢٠٥

[206] And when it is said to

them, "Fear God, and hold back your hands from tyranny", it only drives them to greater sin. When such is their state of mind, they are not the people who will desist from committing excesses. Hell alone will satisfy them. He who seeks hell for his destination has indeed sought an evil destination.

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُ اتَّقِ اللَّهَ أَخَذَتْهُ الْعِزَّةُ بِالْإِثْمِ فَحَسْبُهُ جَهَنَّمُ وَلَبِئْسَ الْمِهَادُ ﴿٢٠٦﴾

[207] As against this type of people, there are some who sacrifice in the way of God their personal interests to seek the pleasure of God, and God is ever gracious to those who are devoted to Him.

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَشْرِي نَفْسَهُ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ رَءُوفٌ بِالْعِبَادِ ﴿٢٠٧﴾

This lure of wordly power has been a powerful factor in leading nations into wrong directions and this is particularly so in moments of success and prosperity. So the followers of the faith have been specially fore-warned against it.

The guidance of God hath been made manifest, and all that is necessary for the upholding of truth hath been explained to you. With all that, should you stumble, and fail to keep to the path of guidance, you will be deprived of the blessings of God.

Should it be regarded that the guidance of the word of God does not suffice them, then the only alternative that remains is that God Himself should appear before them and tell them in person: "I am your God, believe in Me." Such a thing has not happened and will never happen.

To derive the benefits and blessings of faith in God, it is not enough that you just call yourself a Muslim. You will have to get into the very spirit of Islam. Your faith in God

must permeate your thought and activity in every sphere of life.

[208] O Muslims! be ye Muslims; in all aspects of thought and action and do not walk in the footsteps of Satan; for, he indeed is your avowed enemy.

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا ادْخُلُوْا فِي
السِّلْمِ كَاۗفَّةً ۠ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوْا خُطُوٰتِ
الشَّيْطٰنِ ۭ اِنَّهٗ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِيْنٌ ﴿٢٠٨﴾

[209] But if you waver after these clear instructions have come to you, (remember that you cannot save yourselves from the operation of the Law of Requital.) Know that God is mighty, the Wise.

فَاِنْ زَلَلْتُمْ مِّنْۢ بَعْدِ مَا جَاۗءَتْكُمُ الْبَيِّنٰتُ
فَاعْلَمُوْٓا اَنَّ اللّٰهَ عَزِيْزٌ حَكِيْمٌ ﴿٢٠٩﴾

[210] Do these people expect God to come down to them along with angels, with bright clouds for a canopy, and have the matter settled? They hardly realise that ultimately all matters are referred back to God.

هَلْ يَنْظُرُوْنَ اِلَّآ اَنْ يَّاْتِيَهُمُ اللّٰهُ
فِيْ ظُلَلٍ مِّنَ الْغَمَامِ وَالْمَلٰۗىِٕكَةُ
وَقُضِيَ الْاَمْرُ ۭ وَاِلَى اللّٰهِ تُرْجَعُ
الْاُمُوْرُ ﴿٢١٠﴾ ع ٢٥

SECTION 26

God showed the Israelites the way to good life, but they chose the way of evil. Their history offers a lesson for people of understanding.

[211] Ask the children of Israel, how many clear signs did We not give them? But if any one makes a wrong use of the gift of God after receiving, then assuredly God's law of requital will deal a severe chastisement.

سَلْ بَنِيْٓ اِسْرَاۗءِيْلَ كَمْ اٰتَيْنٰهُمْ
مِّنْ اٰيَةٍۢ بَيِّنَةٍ ۭ وَمَنْ يُّبَدِّلْ
نِعْمَةَ اللّٰهِ مِنْۢ بَعْدِ مَا جَاۗءَتْهُ
فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ شَدِيْدُ الْعِقَابِ ﴿٢١١﴾

[212] The life of this world may seem pleasant to those who have no faith and they mock at those who have. But on the day of resurrection, it is the righteous who shall rank higher than these disbelievers, and then they will not seem to know that they, who today may be in indigent condition, may tomorrow, through God's grace, be in affluent circumstances; and God is bounteous without measure to whom He will.

زُيِّنَ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا الْحَيٰوةُ الدُّنْيَا وَيَسْخَرُونَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ اٰمَنُوا ۘ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا فَوْقَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ يَرْزُقُ مَنْ يَّشَاۤءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ﴿٢١٢﴾

The *Qur'ān* here draws attention to a fundamental truth of life. It says that in the beginning, mankind were but one community and that they lived a simple life. But when they multiplied and expanded, there arose among them various conflicts resulting in disorder and mutual oppression. It was then that the process of divine revelation began, and what was revealed was conveyed to them through a series of prophets. The call of every one of these prophets was but one and the same, a call which advised them to live a life of righteousness and unity.

The word of God, or the Book of God as it is styled by the *Qur'ān*, was delivered always with the purpose of settling the differences among mankind and to bend their minds to follow but one *Dīn* or one way of life. The root cause of internal differences is the sin of arrogance and self-interest which disables one to obey the call of Truth.

The attention of the followers of the Faith is drawn here to this weakness only to emphasise that the weakness of the Israelites which contributed to their fall, was not peculiar to them but was noticeable even in the lives of people who had gone before them. What matters primarily in having Truth as the basis of one's life is not so much a knowledge of it,

which is already there from the beginning before mankind, but the desire to remain steadfast in adhering to Truth.

[213] In the beginning, mankind were not divided into groups. On the other hand they were but one community, and then it so happened that they divided themselves into separate groups. So God raised prophets among them to give them glad tidings of the good results that flow from good deeds and to warn them of the evil consequences which flow from evil deeds. With these prophets was also sent down the Book of Truth that they might, under its guidance, resolve their differences and unite together to pursue but one common way of righteous living. But they fell at variance, not because the clear instructions of God had not reached them, but because they were envious of each other, despite their awareness of the revelations having reached them. And God in His graciousness directed the believers to the Truth about which they had differed, and God directeth whom He pleaseth to the straight path.

كَانَ النَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَّاحِدَةً فَبَعَثَ اللّٰهُ النَّبِيّٖنَ مُبَشِّرِيْنَ وَمُنْذِرِيْنَ وَاَنْزَلَ مَعَهُمُ الْكِتٰبَ بِالْحَقِّ لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ فِيْمَا اخْتَلَفُوْا فِيْهِ ؕ وَمَا اخْتَلَفَ فِيْهِ اِلَّا الَّذِيْنَ اُوْتُوْهُ مِنْۢ بَعْدِ مَا جَآءَتْهُمُ الْبَيِّنٰتُ بَغْيًاۢ بَيْنَهُمْ ۚ فَهَدَى اللّٰهُ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لِمَا اخْتَلَفُوْا فِيْهِ مِنَ الْحَقِّ بِاِذْنِهٖ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ يَهْدِىْ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ اِلٰى صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيْمٍ ﴿٢١٣﴾

To be a true believer, it is not enough that you simply avow the faith and thus feel competent to enter Heaven. On the other hand, you should bear with fortitude

all the trials which befall you, even as the adherents of Truth before you had borne the trials which befell them in their times.

[214] Do you fancy that by the mere verbal avowel of faith you will enter the Garden, although you have not yet passed through the ordeals through which those who went before you had passed. Poverty and distress in endless forms tried them, and they were so shaken that the Apostle and those of the faith who were by his side had to cry out, "O help of God! When will it arrive?" At that moment the veil of the unknown was torn asunder and the help of God made its appearance to announce, "Yea! do not despair, the help of God is nigh!"

أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ
وَلَمَّا يَأْتِكُمْ مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ خَلَوْا
مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ ۖ مَسَّتْهُمُ الْبَأْسَاءُ
وَالضَّرَّاءُ وَزُلْزِلُوا حَتَّىٰ يَقُولَ
الرَّسُولُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَهُ
مَتَىٰ نَصْرُ اللَّهِ ۗ أَلَا إِنَّ نَصْرَ اللَّهِ
قَرِيبٌ ﴿٢١٤﴾

The *Qur'ān* here clarifies the issue of charity. It corrects the notion that charity is no charity if it is given to one's kindred and that it is meant only for others. The *Qur'ān* points out that charity should go, in the first instance, to the needy among one's own kindred.

[215] They ask thee what they should spend on others. Say: Whatever of your wealth you can spare, let it be for your parents, and kindred and orphans and the indigent and the way-farer; and whatever good you do, God knoweth.

يَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنْفِقُونَ ۖ قُلْ
مَا أَنْفَقْتُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ
فَلِلْوَالِدَيْنِ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ
وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَابْنِ
السَّبِيلِ ۗ وَمَا تَفْعَلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ
فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢١٥﴾

The *Qur'ān* now turns to the question of fighting in defence of the Faith and of freedom:

(1) The state of war is never pleasant. But are there not pleasant ends which are gained through unpleasant means and vice versa?

(2) War is an evil. But disorder in society resulting from the high-handedness of man is a greater evil. So, when disorder gets beyond ordinary control, the only remedy is to war against it.

The unbelievers opposed the Muslims not because of any grouse against any individual or body of individuals among them. It was because of the new faith they had adopted. They were determined not to rest until they forced the Muslims to change their faith; and since this was not possible for the Muslims, the only alternative left for them was to fight back in the cause of the truth they believed in.

(3) Being the sponsor of peace or of Islam, the *Qur'ān* does not and cannot advocate fighting. But when the unbelievers chose to wage a war against the Muslims, the latter were permitted to take up the challenge and not take to their heels.

[216] Fighting is now ordained you. But this pleases you not. May be you dislike a thing though it be good for you, and may be you like a thing which is bad for you. God knoweth: but ye, ye know not.

كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِتَالُ وَهُوَ
كُرْهٌ لَّكُمْ ۚ وَعَسَىٰ أَن تَكْرَهُوا
شَيْئًا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ ۚ وَعَسَىٰ
أَن تُحِبُّوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ شَرٌّ
لَّكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنتُمْ
لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢١٦﴾

SECTION 27

[217] They ask thee concerning warfare in the month held sacred. Say: To war in that month is bad; but to turn away people from the

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الشَّهْرِ الْحَرَامِ قِتَالٍ
فِيهِ ۖ قُلْ قِتَالٌ فِيهِ كَبِيرٌ ۖ وَصَدٌّ

cause of God and go against Him, and deny entry to the sacred mosque and to drive out its inmates is much worse in the sight of God. Persecution is more heinous than bloodshed.

And remember that these people will not cease fighting against you until they turn you from your faith if they can. But mark! that who so from among you will turn from his faith and die an unbeliever, he will be among those whose work shall be fruitless in this world and also in the next, and who shall be the companions of Fire to abide therein.

[218] But on the other hand, they who have believed and have remained steadfast in their belief and have emigrated and struggled in the cause of God, may hope for Divine grace; and God will be gracious to them, for He is full of mercy.

عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَكُفْرٌ بِهِ وَالْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَإِخْرَاجُ أَهْلِهِ مِنْهُ أَكْبَرُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ ۚ وَالْفِتْنَةُ أَكْبَرُ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ ۗ وَلَا يَزَالُونَ يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ حَتَّىٰ يَرُدُّوكُمْ عَنْ دِينِكُمْ إِنِ اسْتَطَاعُوا ۚ وَمَنْ يَرْتَدِدْ مِنْكُمْ عَنْ دِينِهِ فَيَمُتْ وَهُوَ كَافِرٌ فَأُولَٰئِكَ حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ ۖ وَأُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ ۖ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ﴿٢١٧﴾ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا وَجَاهَدُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أُولَٰئِكَ يَرْجُونَ رَحْمَتَ اللَّهِ ۚ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٢١٨﴾

In connection with war, three issues called for consideration. A notion was prevalent in the past and still prevails that wine instils in man the fighting spirit and that gambling is a means of earning money. The *Qur'ān* discredits both the notions. It points out that in the use of a thing it is not its benefits alone which should attract one. Relative benefits do result from the use of everything. In making use of a thing, it is always advisable to weigh both the benefits and the injuries it offers, and discard that which does more harm than good.

The second question before the followers of the faith in the time of the Prophet was: How much of one's earnings should one offer towards the cost of war or towards similar needs of the community. The *Qur'ān* does not fix any proportion. It advises to give away what remains after meeting one's necessities.

The third question related to orphans taken under one's guardianship. Direction is given that whatever is good in their interest should be done. In fact, it would be well if they are admitted into one's home and treated as family members.

[219] O Prophet! they ask thee concerning wine and games of chance. Say: "In both is great harm and also some advantage to men; but their harm is greater than their advantage".

[220] And they ask thee what they should give away in the cause of God. Say: "Whatever remains after meeting your necessities". Thus doth God make clear to you His signs that you may ponder on the life of this world and on that of the world to follow.

يَسْـَٔلُوْنَكَ عَنِ الْخَمْرِ
وَالْمَيْسِرِ ؕ قُلْ فِيْهِمَآ
اِثْمٌ كَبِيْرٌ وَّمَنَافِعُ
لِلنَّاسِ ۫ وَاِثْمُهُمَآ اَكْبَرُ مِنْ
نَّفْعِهِمَا ؕ وَيَسْـَٔلُوْنَكَ مَاذَا
يُنْفِقُوْنَ ۬ ؕ قُلِ الْعَفْوَ ؕ كَذٰلِكَ
يُبَيِّنُ اللّٰهُ لَكُمُ الْاٰيٰتِ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَفَكَّرُوْنَ ﴿۲۱۹﴾

And they ask thee concerning orphans. Say: "Whatever is good in their interest should be done". And if you wish to manage their affairs along with your own by treating them as family members, you may do so. After all, they are your brothers and not strangers to you; and God knows full well who is desirous of improving their lot and who, of exploiting them. So, if you are honest in your intentions,

فِى الدُّنْيَا وَالْاٰخِرَةِ ؕ وَيَسْـَٔلُوْنَكَ
عَنِ الْيَتٰمٰى ؕ قُلْ اِصْلَاحٌ لَّهُمْ
خَيْرٌ ؕ وَاِنْ تُخَالِطُوْهُمْ

you should not hesitate in taking the responsibility of managing their affairs. Had God so wished, He would have imposed on you exacting conditions of management, (for, the responsibility of safeguarding the rights and interests of orphans is a serious responsibility); without doubt God is Mighty, Wise.

فَإِخْوَانُكُمْ ۚ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ الْمُفْسِدَ
مِنَ الْمُصْلِحِ ۚ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ
لَأَعْنَتَكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٢٢٠﴾

In the time of war with the unbelievers, the question arose whether intermarriage with them was permissible. The *Qur'ān* stated that marriage between a believing man and an unbelieving woman or between a believing woman and an unbelieving man was not permissible, since it was because of their belief that the unbelievers had become their enemies and were anxious to turn them away from their faith. Any marital relations in such circumstances with them would not bring any good to the Muslims.

[221] Do not wed women who associate others with God until they believe. An unbelieving woman may be pleasing to you; but a believing woman should be preferred to her. And likewise, wed not your believing women to those men who associate others with God until they accept the faith. And of a surety, a bondman who is a believer is better than a free man who associates others with God, albeit he pleases you. They (the polytheists of Arabia)

وَلَا تَنكِحُوا الْمُشْرِكَاتِ حَتَّىٰ يُؤْمِنَّ ۚ
وَلَأَمَةٌ مُّؤْمِنَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّن
مُّشْرِكَةٍ وَلَوْ أَعْجَبَتْكُمْ ۗ وَلَا
تُنكِحُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ حَتَّىٰ يُؤْمِنُوا ۚ
وَلَعَبْدٌ مُّؤْمِنٌ خَيْرٌ مِّن مُّشْرِكٍ
وَلَوْ أَعْجَبَكُمْ ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى

desire the Muslims to turn away from their faith and therefore invite them to Fire. But God, by opening out for you the path of Truth, inviteth you to Heaven and to His protection. He maketh clear His signs for the guidance of men that they may be heedful.

النَّارِ ۖ وَاللَّهُ يَدْعُوا إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ وَ
الْمَغْفِرَةِ بِإِذْنِهِ ۖ وَيُبَيِّنُ آيَاتِهِ
لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢٢١﴾

Section 28

The question of marriage with the polytheists incidentally has raised here the issues of marriage in general and divorce and other problems of marital relationship.

(1) The Commandment is issued that no one should go in to his wife while she is menstruating. The restriction is imposed not because women get polluted during this period and deserve to be kept out of human touch as was the idea prevalent among the Jews. On the other hand, the restriction is promulgated because any sexual intercourse in this state was clearly unhygienic and positively injurious in its results.

(2) Nature has prescribed a normal procedure in sex relationship. It is not desirable to disturb it. God loves those who protect themselves from all impurities.

(3) In respect of this conjugal relationship, a number of curious practices were in vogue among the Arabs so much so that some of these were considered permissible and some not, and some auspicious and some not. The *Qur'ān* brushes aside all such fancies and recommends that whatever is normal to man's nature may be observed.

[222] O Prophet! they question thee concerning menstruation. Say: "It is

وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْمَحِيضِ ۖ قُلْ

هُوَ اَذًى فَاعۡتَزِلُوا النِّسَآءَ فِى الۡمَحِيۡضِ وَلَا تَقۡرَبُوۡهُنَّ حَتّٰى يَطۡهُرۡنَ ۚ فَاِذَا تَطَهَّرۡنَ فَاۡتُوۡهُنَّ مِنۡ حَيۡثُ اَمَرَكُمُ اللّٰهُ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يُحِبُّ التَّوَّابِيۡنَ وَيُحِبُّ الۡمُتَطَهِّرِيۡنَ ﴿۲۲۲﴾

a period of strain". So, do not go in to women during menstruation until they are cleansed; and when they have cleansed themselves, go in to them in the manner God hath permitted you. Do not therefore follow any other manner which may be unnatural. Verily, God loveth those who want to be saved from evil, and loveth those who observe cleanliness.

نِسَآؤُكُمۡ حَرۡثٌ لَّـكُمۡ فَاۡتُوۡا حَرۡثَكُمۡ اَنّٰى شِئۡتُمۡ وَقَدِّمُوۡا لِاَنۡفُسِكُمۡ ؕ وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ وَاعۡلَمُوۡٓا اَنَّكُمۡ مُّلٰقُوۡهُ ؕ وَبَشِّرِ الۡمُؤۡمِنِيۡنَ ﴿۲۲۳﴾

[223] Your wives are your tilth. So, enter your tilth as you will in a natural manner, and this only to assure for yourself a progeny; and be mindful of God in every situation, and do not forget that one day you are to die and have to appear before Him. And O Prophet, convey to the faithful the glad tidings that they are to enjoy the facilities allowed to them and freedom from every absurd restriction.

Certain misconceptions relating to married life are here corrected:

(1) It is contrary to a right belief in God to take an oath in the name of God not to do a thing that is proper in marital relationship and give that as an excuse for shirking one's responsibility to do the right thing, or for severing marital connection.

(2) An absurd vow is not to be adhered to. One will be held responsible for only that which he hath undertaken to do in sincerity and with a full knowledge of its implications.

(3) What is to be done when a man vows not to go in to his wife as was the practice among the Arabs, the practice known as I'la'?

[224] Do not in your oaths swear by God just to absolve yourselves from doing a right thing. Abstain from evil and promote peace among men. And God heareth, knoweth.

ولا تجعلوا الله عرضة لأيمانكم أن تبروا وتتقوا وتصلحوا بين الناس والله سميع عليم ٢٢٤

[225] God will not call you to account for any flaw in your vow, but will call you to account for what your minds have resolved. And God is Gracious, Forbearing.

لا يؤاخذكم الله باللغو في أيمانكم ولكن يؤاخذكم بما كسبت قلوبكم والله غفور حليم ٢٢٥

[226] For those who have vowed to abstain from going in to their wives, a respite of four months is prescribed. If they elect to go back upon their vow during this period, then, verily God is Gracious, Merciful.

للذين يؤلون من نسائهم تربص أربعة أشهر فإن فاءو فإن الله غفور رحيم ٢٢٦

[227] And if they resolve on a divorce, then they should not forget that the fact of their having decided upon separation will not go unnoticed by God, for, He heareth and knoweth.

وإن عزموا الطلاق فإن الله سميع عليم ٢٢٧

Here follow the regulations governing divorce, and the restrictions with which this permission is hedged:

(1) By fixing a specific period before the expiry of which divorce will not be regarded as valid, the *Qur'ān* aims to bring home to every one concerned the sanctity of the marriage tie; thus it safeguards the interest of the child that may be in the womb of the divorced

woman, affording her at the same time facility of time for her remarriage with another.

(2) The principle envisaged here is that the husband, who has resolved to divorce, has the primary right to recall his decision; for, the provisions of law have a bias in favour of a re-union rather than of a total separation.

(3) In so far as the rights of women are concerned, a definite principle is laid down that women have rights over men, even as men have rights over women.

(4) The procedure to follow in the pronouncement of divorce is as follows:

The pronouncement should be made thrice in three distinct sittings in three months successively. The divorce becomes absolute when it is pronounced for the third time in the third sitting in the third month. Till then the opportunities for a return to each other or reunion remain. So, the marriage tie is not so flimsy that it can be broken any moment as one likes. To break it, it is necessary to pass through several stages; at each stage it is necessary to reflect deeply over the consequences to follow. Every succeeding stage is the respite allowed for retracing a step wrongly taken. It is only when all hope of reconciliation is given up that a final decision is to be reached.

(5) It is not proper for the husband when divorce is pronounced finally to take back from the divorced woman what he had given her in the past or to deny her what hath been promised to her, as was the custom among the Arabs in pre-Islamic days.

(6) But a situation may arise when, without any desire on the part of the husband and for no weakness of his, marital relations between the two do not seem to run on smooth lines, and it is feared that the two may not be in a position to discharge their obligations to each other satisfactorily, so much so, that the woman offers to give up the right to her dower or a part of it in lieu of a divorce from her husband and the husband

agrees to it, then the arrangement sought is permissible. Such a settlement is called *Khula'* in Islamic law.

(7) The object of marriage is not to force a woman on a man or vice versa and bind them in this relation at all costs; nor is it its object to make a woman just a victim to man's selfish desires. Its real object is to give to a couple the opportunity of a happy and united married life. Such a consummation is possible only when mutual regard and affection subsit between them, and the bounds of God or the proprieties of life enjoined by religion are willingly respected. Where this is lacking, the object of marriage is unattainable and it becomes necessary to open out the door for each of the two to seek freedom. Not to do so, even when it becomes evident that the object of marriage is absolutely unattainable, will be a denial of freedom and positive cruelty. It is contributing to the disintegration of society.

(8) It is the duty of man either to allow his wife all the privileges of a wife or open out for her the way to freedom by means of divorce. It will be certainly improper for him neither to accord to his wife the privileges of a wife nor to give her the chance of severing her connections with him and deliberately to keep her in a state of helpless suspension as the Arabs of the pre-Islamic days used to do out of sheer malice.

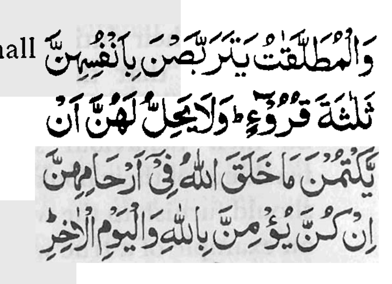
(9) The problem of marital life is a very delicate one. The woman has very often been a victim to man's passion and selfishness. That is why the followers of the Faith have been enjoined to be specially careful in the discharge of their duties towards their wives. They should remember that they have been raised through the Qur'ānic training to the status of a model society. So their behaviour should be worthy of the great teachings of their Book which they have imbibed. They should furnish to the world at large, by their behaviour, an example of a true wedded life— a wedded life mark-

ed by manners born of a sincere devotion to God. Incidentally it is also pointed out that a community among whom the sense of mutual devotion between mân and wife has not developed on sound lines, will not attain a prosperous state.

(10) When a woman has been divorced and the period of waiting is also over, she is at liberty to marry whomsoever she likes. It will not be proper to prevent her from exercising this right or subject her to any form of duress. This injunction is emphasised for the fear that men might be tempted to thwart the free exercise of a woman's right. The *Qur'ān* warns against its violation in these words: "Here is a counsel for him among you who believeth in God and the last Day."

(11) An important issue arose out of the question of divorçe. What was to be the arrangement of maintaining the young ones when the parents were separated? Many were the apprehensions held in this connection. The motherly love demands that her child should not be taken away from her and that she should suckle it herself. So it was ordained that till the child lived on the milk of the mother, its expenses should be borne by the father and a period of two years was fixed for this purpose. In respect of this provision, two things were to be taken into consideration. Neither the mother was to be made to suffer on account of the child, nor the father, and that nothing was to be charged to the father which was beyond his means to provide.

[228] The divorced women shall not feel themselves free to enter into marriage with another until they have had their course thrice; and if they really believe in God and the Last Day it will not be proper for them to conceal the


وَالْمُطَلَّقٰتُ يَتَرَبَّصْنَ بِأَنْفُسِهِنَّ ثَلٰثَةَ قُرُوْءٍ ۭ وَلَا يَحِلُّ لَهُنَّ أَنْ يَّكْتُمْنَ مَا خَلَقَ اللّٰهُ فِيْ أَرْحَامِهِنَّ إِنْ كُنَّ يُؤْمِنَّ بِاللّٰهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْاٰخِرِ ۭ

knowledge of what God hath created in their wombs. And their husbands who had divorced them will have a right to claim them back within this period if they desire to improve their relations. It is but fair that women should have rights over men even as men have rights over women, albeit men rank a degree above them; and remember that God is mightily wise.

وَبُعُولَتُهُنَّ أَحَقُّ بِرَدِّهِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ إِنْ أَرَادُوٓا۟ إِصْلَٰحًا ۚ وَلَهُنَّ مِثْلُ ٱلَّذِى عَلَيْهِنَّ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ ۚ وَلِلرِّجَالِ عَلَيْهِنَّ دَرَجَةٌ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٢٢٨﴾

SECTION 29

[229] A return to each other is permissible even after divorce has been pronounced twice (in two successive months). Thereafter two ways are open before the husbands—an honourable retention or a graceful parting, (after the pronouncement of divorce for the third time in the third month). And it shall not be proper for you while divorcing your wives to take away anything out of what you have given them. It will be different if the husband and the wife agree to any such arrangement out of a fear that they cannot keep within the bounds set by God. Then, if you fear that the two cannot keep within the bounds set by God, no blame shall attach to either for what the woman herself gives away for her redemption. These are

ٱلطَّلَٰقُ مَرَّتَانِ ۖ فَإِمْسَاكٌۢ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ تَسْرِيحٌۢ بِإِحْسَٰنٍ ۗ وَلَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ أَن تَأْخُذُوا۟ مِمَّآ ءَاتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ شَيْـًٔا إِلَّآ أَن يَخَافَآ أَلَّا يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ ٱللَّهِ ۖ فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ ٱللَّهِ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا فِيمَا ٱفْتَدَتْ بِهِۦ ۗ تِلْكَ حُدُودُ ٱللَّهِ فَلَا تَعْتَدُوهَا

the bounds of God; therefore, overstep them not, for, they who overstep the bounds of God are indeed transgressors.

[230] But if a man (does not reclaim the woman after the pronouncement of the divorce twice, and) pronounces divorce for the third time (in the third month), then divorce becomes absolute. Thereafter it is not lawful for him to take her again until she shall have married another; and if this another man to whom she is married also divorces her, and the woman cares to come back to the first husband, then there shall be no blame on them if they return to each other, trusting that they will keep within the bounds set by God. And these are the bounds of God, clearly ordained for a people who understand.

[231] And when you have divorced your wives and the period of waiting is nearing its end, you have only two ways open before you. Either retain them with due propriety or part from them with due propriety. But retain them not just to cause them hurt and commit excesses by neither claiming them back, nor letting them go, but by keeping them in a state of suspense. Do not make the commandments of God a jest (by marrying a woman today and divorcing her without cause the

وَمَنْ يَتَعَدَّ حُدُوْدَ اللّٰهِ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ
هُمُ الظّٰلِمُوْنَ ﴿٢٢٩﴾
نْ طَلَّقَهَا فَلَا تَحِلُّ لَهٗ
مِنْۢ بَعْدُ حَتّٰى تَنْكِحَ
زَوْجًا غَيْرَهٗ ؕ فَاِنْ
طَلَّقَهَا فَلَا جُنَاحَ
عَلَيْهِمَآ اَنْ يَّتَرَاجَعَآ
اِنْ ظَنَّآ اَنْ يُّقِيْمَا
دُوْدَ اللّٰهِ ؕ وَتِلْكَ
دُوْدُ اللّٰهِ
يِّنُهَا لِقَوْمٍ
يَّعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٢٣٠﴾
وَاِذَا طَلَّقْتُمُ النِّسَآءَ فَبَلَغْنَ
اَجَلَهُنَّ فَاَمْسِكُوْهُنَّ
مَعْرُوْفٍ اَوْ سَرِّحُوْهُنَّ
مَعْرُوْفٍ ۪ وَّلَا تُمْسِكُوْ
هُنَّ ضِرَارًا لِّتَعْتَدُوْا ۚ وَمَنْ

very next day). Remember the favour of God shown to you. He hath revealed to you the Book along with its underlying purposes wherewith to counsel you; and be mindful of Him and know that nothing that you do is outside the knowledge of God.

فَقَدْ ظَلَمَ نَفْسَهُ ۚ
وَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا آيَاتِ اللَّهِ هُزُوًا ۚ وَ
اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَمَا
أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَالْحِكْمَةِ
يَعِظُكُمْ بِهِ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا
أَنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٣١﴾

SECTION 30

[232] And when you have divorced your women, and thereafter completed the prescribed period of waiting, hinder them not if they want to marry others when they are agreed on it in due propriety. Here is a counsel for him among you who believeth in God and the Last Day. For you this is the way to decency and purity. And God knoweth, but ye, ye know not.

وَإِذَا طَلَّقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَبَلَغْنَ
أَجَلَهُنَّ فَلَا تَعْضُلُوهُنَّ أَنْ
يَنْكِحْنَ أَزْوَاجَهُنَّ إِذَا تَرَاضَوْا
بَيْنَهُمْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ يُوعَظُ
بِهِ مَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ
وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ۗ ذَٰلِكُمْ أَزْكَىٰ لَكُمْ
وَأَطْهَرُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٣٢﴾

[233] If a woman who is divorced has a child in her lap, and the mother wishes to give suck to it, she can do so for two years; and it falls on the person who is the father of the child to meet the expenses of the maintenance and clothing of the mother and the child; (and the cost thereof shall not however be beyond his means. The principle is that) none shall be charged beyond one's means. Neither the mother shall be made to suffer for the child,

وَالْوَالِدَاتُ يُرْضِعْنَ أَوْلَادَهُنَّ
حَوْلَيْنِ كَامِلَيْنِ لِمَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ
يُتِمَّ الرَّضَاعَةَ ۚ وَعَلَى الْمَوْلُودِ لَهُ
رِزْقُهُنَّ وَكِسْوَتُهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۚ
لَا تُكَلَّفُ نَفْسٌ إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا ۚ لَا تُضَارَّ
وَالِدَةٌ بِوَلَدِهَا وَلَا مَوْلُودٌ لَهُ
بِوَلَدِهِ ۚ وَعَلَى الْوَارِثِ مِثْلُ ذَٰلِكَ ۗ
فَإِنْ أَرَادَا فِصَالًا عَنْ تَرَاضٍ مِنْهُمَا

nor the father. Should the father die during this period, the responsibility for the maintenance of the child devolves on his heir; but if the father and the mother choose to wean the child in mutual consultation and with the consent of both, no blame shall rest on them. But if you choose to have a nurse for your child, no blame shall rest on you provided you pay to the mother with due propriety what you have promised her. And be mindful of God and know that God seeth what ye do.

وَتَشَاوُرٍ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا ۗ وَإِنْ
أَرَدتُّمْ أَن تَسْتَرْضِعُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ
فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذَا سَلَّمْتُم
مَّا آتَيْتُم بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۗ وَاتَّقُوا
اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا
تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٢٣٣﴾

[234] And if any of you die leaving wives behind, these women should wait for four months and ten days; and when this period expires, you shall not be answerable for the way in which they shall dispose of themselves with propriety. And God is aware of what you do.

وَالَّذِينَ يُتَوَفَّوْنَ مِنكُمْ وَ
يَذَرُونَ أَزْوَاجًا يَتَرَبَّصْنَ
بِأَنفُسِهِنَّ أَرْبَعَةَ أَشْهُرٍ وَعَشْرًا
فَإِذَا بَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَلَا جُنَاحَ
عَلَيْكُمْ فِيمَا فَعَلْنَ فِي أَنفُسِهِنَّ
بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ ﴿٢٣٤﴾

[235] And then, no blame shall attach to you, if during the period of waiting, you make proposal of marriage in some indirect or informal manner or entertain in your hearts any such wish. God knoweth that you have kept them in your thoughts. But do not hold out any promise to them in private except in conventional terms. and resolve not on marriage until the period prescribed is completed, since it is not becoming for a widow to make

وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيمَا عَرَّضْتُم
بِهِ مِنْ خِطْبَةِ النِّسَاءِ أَوْ أَكْنَنتُمْ
فِي أَنفُسِكُمْ ۚ عَلِمَ اللَّهُ أَنَّكُمْ
سَتَذْكُرُونَهُنَّ وَلَٰكِن لَّا
تُوَاعِدُوهُنَّ سِرًّا إِلَّا أَن تَقُولُوا
قَوْلًا مَّعْرُوفًا ۚ وَلَا تَعْزِمُوا

marriage preparations during such a period; and know that God knoweth the inner weaknesses of your hearts. Therefore, be not unmindful of Him and know that God is Forgiving, Forbearing.

عُقْدَةَ النِّكَاحِ حَتّٰى يَبْلُغَ الْكِتٰبُ
أَجَلَهُۥ وَاعْلَمُوٓا أَنَّ اللّٰهَ يَعْلَمُ
مَا فِيٓ أَنْفُسِكُمْ فَاحْذَرُوهُ ۚ وَ
اعْلَمُوٓا أَنَّ اللّٰهَ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٣٥﴾

SECTION 31

The following are the regulations which govern the pronouncement of divorce before the consummation of marriage:

(1) If the *Mehr* or dower had not been fixed at the time of marriage, the man should pay to the woman as much as his means permit.
(2) If the *Mehr* had been fixed, he shall pay a half of it to the woman, but it will be a sign of goodness in him if he pays more.
(3) In view of the fact that in marital relations, the man has an advantage over the woman, it becomes him to show to the woman a greater degree of forbearance than what is possible for her to show to him.

[236] No blame shall attach to you if you divorce your women before you have touched them or settled the dower or *Mehr* on them. But make provision for them—the affluent in circumstances according to his means and the straitened according to his means, as considered fair. This is an obligation on those who act kindly.

[237] And if you divorce them before you have touched them but after you have settled a dower or *Mehr* on them, then give them a half of what you have settled

لَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِنْ طَلَّقْتُمُ
النِّسَآءَ مَا لَمْ تَمَسُّوهُنَّ أَوْ
تَفْرِضُوا لَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً ۚ وَ
مَتِّعُوهُنَّ ۚ عَلَى الْمُوسِعِ قَدَرُهُ
وَعَلَى الْمُقْتِرِ قَدَرُهُ ۚ مَتَاعًا
بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۚ حَقًّا عَلَى الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٢٣٦﴾
وَإِنْ طَلَّقْتُمُوهُنَّ مِنْ قَبْلِ
أَنْ تَمَسُّوهُنَّ وَقَدْ فَرَضْتُمْ
لَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً فَنِصْفُ مَا فَرَضْتُمْ

for them, unless a woman by herself forgoes it, or he in whose hands is the marriage knot chooses to remit the whole of it. And if you so remit, it will be nearer to piety. And do not forget to emulate each other in kindliness. Surely God watcheth over what you do.

إِلَّآ أَن يَعْفُونَ أَوْ يَعْفُوَا۟ ٱلَّذِى بِيَدِهِۦ عُقْدَةُ ٱلنِّكَاحِ ۚ وَأَن تَعْفُوٓا۟ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ ۚ وَلَا تَنسَوُا۟ ٱلْفَضْلَ بَيْنَكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٢٣٧﴾

How is man who is subject to passions and selfish desires to develop in him the sense of moral responsibility in social relations which alone will make him fit to discharge satisfactorily the obligations which his marriage imposes on him?

This is possible only when he cultivates the spirit of true devotion to God; and this spirit is stimulated only through sincere and humble prayer. It is therefore upto man to be strict and steadfast in his prayers. He should not give up this habit even on the battle-field.

[238] Be mindful of prayers, especially, the middle prayer ('Asr), and stand in utmost reverence to God.

حَـٰفِظُوا۟ عَلَى ٱلصَّلَوَٰتِ وَٱلصَّلَوٰةِ ٱلْوُسْطَىٰ وَقُومُوا۟ لِلَّهِ قَـٰنِتِينَ ﴿٢٣٨﴾

[239] If you in any way feel alarmed for fear of the enemy attacking you, then, pray in the manner possible for you either afoot or mounted. But when you feel safe, then, pray to God in the manner He had taught you which you knew not before.

فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ فَرِجَالًا أَوْ رُكْبَانًا ۖ فَإِذَآ أَمِنتُمْ فَٱذْكُرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ كَمَا عَلَّمَكُم مَّا لَمْ تَكُونُوا۟ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٣٩﴾

A dying man may leave behind a testament to the effect that his wife should stay in his house for a year and receive main-

tenance for this period. But it is up to the woman to stay in the husband's house for a year as was the custom among the Arabs, or if she desires she may quit it after the compulsory period, prescribed by the *Qur'ān*, of four months and ten days, is over.

وَالَّذِينَ يُتَوَفَّوْنَ مِنكُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ أَزْوَاجًا وَصِيَّةً لِّأَزْوَاجِهِم مَّتَاعًا إِلَى الْحَوْلِ غَيْرَ إِخْرَاجٍ ۚ فَإِنْ خَرَجْنَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي مَا فَعَلْنَ فِي أَنفُسِهِنَّ مِن مَّعْرُوفٍ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٢٤٠﴾

[240] And such of you as die and leave wives behind shall bequeath for their wives a year's maintenance without requiring them to quit their houses; but if they quit them voluntarily before the expiry of the year and with a view to making any arrangement for their own future (in the form of a possible marriage) in an appropriate manner, no blame shall attach to you if you do not insist on their staying for the whole period. And God is Mighty, Wise.

Although the provisions touching marriage and divorce have been already stated, the *Qurān* takes occasion to re-emphasise that proper consideration should be shown to the divorced woman in every circumstance. This repeated call for consideration to woman was for no other reason than that her position deserved due attention, since she was comparatively weaker than man and her interests needed to be properly safeguarded.

وَلِلْمُطَلَّقَاتِ مَتَاعٌ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۖ حَقًّا عَلَى الْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٢٤١﴾

[241] And for the divorced women, let there be a fair provision. This is an obligation on those who are mindful of God.

كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٢٤٢﴾

[242] Thus doth God make clear His commandments to you that you may understand.

Section 32

The *Qur'ān* now returns to the subject of fighting in the cause of God, and points out that a community which fears death is never successful in life. The illustration is furnished from the history of the Israelites, who, despite their number, shirked fighting in the cause of God.

[243] O Prophet! Dost thou not know of those who forsook their homes for fear of death although they were in thousands, and could bravely have met the enemy? God decreed that since they were running away from death, death should pursue them and morally they should perish. But God however chose to give them a fresh life: so much so, that in their revivified condition, they fought their enemies successfully. God indeed is full of graciousness to man; but most people do not show gratitude in return.

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ خَرَجُوا مِن
دِيَارِهِمْ وَهُمْ أُلُوفٌ حَذَرَ الْمَوْتِ
فَقَالَ لَهُمُ اللَّهُ مُوتُوا ثُمَّ أَحْيَاهُمْ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى النَّاسِ
وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٢٤٣﴾

[244] Now remember! Do not fear death if you have to fight in the way of God, and know that God heareth all that you say to each other in this connection and knoweth what you do.

وَقَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَاعْلَمُوا
أَنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٤٤﴾

To contribute to the expense of *Jehad* or of fighting for the cause of God is, according to the *Qur'ān*, to lend a loan to Him.

مَنْ ذَا الَّذِىْ يُقْرِضُ اللّٰهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا فَيُضٰعِفَهٗ لَهٗٓ اَضْعَافًا كَثِيْرَةً ؕ وَاللّٰهُ يَقْبِضُ وَيَبْصُۜطُ ۪ وَاِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُوْنَ ﴿۲۴۵﴾

[245] Who is it, who enters into transactions with God, and with good cheer offers Him a loan? Let him know that God in His turn repays it to him by doubling it over and over again. (In other words, by offering even a thing of small value in the way of God, he gains in return countless benefits, both material and spiritual.) Let not the fear of lessening your wealth on that account deter you from making your contribution to the war fund. Remember, it is God who lesseneth or increaseth one's wealth; and remember that to Him you are to return.

Here are explained certain truths of life deduced from the happenings in the reign of Saul and the struggle between the Palestinians and the Israelites:

(1) In a community which lacks the true spirit of patience and endurance, whatever the fervour for exertion exhibited every now and then by its members, it has been found that, in the hour of trial, few are found who can endure steadfastly the incidental ordeals.

(2) He alone is fit for leadership, who has a natural talent for it, no matter that he possesses no wealth or does not hold a high place in society. In other words, it is the mental or bodily qualities of a person which qualify him for leadership and not mere wealth or lineage or family status.

(3) Once a person is chosen leader, it becomes the duty of every member of his community to obey him wholeheartedly. A community whose members have not

developed the sense of loyalty to their leader, will never succeed as a community in the struggle for existence.

(4) The incident of Saul asking his followers not to take water from the river they were to cross, and the conduct of his followers offers a lesson of deep significance. The lesson is this. A people who, even in a small matter like quenching their thirst, will not exercise restraint for a little while, cannot be expected to endure with steadfastness the stresses of the battle-field.

(5) How often has not a small band of people gained victory over an enormous force. It is not the numbers which decide the issue of a battle but the strength of will of the belligerents. Divine aid goes always to those who are firm of faith and steadfast in their resolves.

(6) Desiring a thing from God is of little value unless one has the talent to deserve the thing asked for. The loyal followers of Saul did not ask for mere victory. On the other hand, they asked also for the grant of the strength to bear the strain of the fight with firmness; for they knew that Divine help was granted only to those in whom the spirit of steadfast endurance was strong.

(7) Had not one section of humanity contented with another section to see that justice prevailed among them, there would have set in an endless series of internal tensions resulting in a never-ceasing oppression of the weak and general disorder allowing little chance for either truth or justice to assert itself for the good of human life. So it is part of the divine scheme of things and a sign of divine mercy and graciousness that whenever mischief raises its head anywhere, a counter force is already there provided to thwart the rising mischief. It is thus that a balance in life is sustained.

(8) So the institution of war is a necessity. It keeps international injustice in proper check. In different times and one after another, prophets were raised among mankind to preach the cause of unity and truthfulness

in life. Had mankind followed their advice properly and not divided themselves into contending or rival groups, they would not have involved themselves in internecine warfare.

Had God so willed, He would have constituted man's nature in such a fashion that the tendency to disagree would not have been a constituent element of it, pressing life thereby to a dull uniform pattern. But the purpose of creation was otherwise. Man was created, not to be a mere automaton. On the other hand, he was made with a will to pursue any path that he may choose for himself. So, many are there among mankind who have adopted the path of righteous living, and many are there who have preferred the wrong way.

The Prophet of Islam was told that it was part of the Divine scheme to ask him at a certain stage in the course of his mission to take to war since that was the only way by which injustice could be redressed and peace and order restored.

(9) When war was thus inevitable, the followers of the Prophet were enjoined not to close their eyes to its necessity and not to spare any means to fight in the cause of God

(10) Salvation in the life hereafter depends entirely on faith and action. There, neither can salvation be purchased, nor any friendship of this world count, nor intercession by anyone be of any avail.

[246] O Prophet! Hast thou not thought of the elders of the Israelites who after Moses asked of a prophet of theirs: "Set up for us a king that we might fight in the way of God". He said: "If to fight were you ordained, it may be that you would not fight". They said, "And

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الْمَلَإِ مِنْ بَنِيٓ إِسْرَآءِيلَ
مِنْ بَعْدِ مُوسَىٰ إِذْ قَالُوا لِنَبِيٍّ
لَّهُمُ ابْعَثْ لَنَا مَلِكًا نُّقَاتِلْ فِي
سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ۖ قَالَ هَلْ عَسَيْتُمْ
إِنْ كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِتَالُ أَلَّا

what aileth us that we should not fight in the way of God when we have been torn from our homes and our children?" But when fighting was actually ordered, they turned back save a few of them. But God knew the offenders.

تُقَاتِلُوا ۖ قَالُوا وَمَا لَنَا أَلَّا نُقَاتِلَ
فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَقَدْ أُخْرِجْنَا مِن
دِيَارِنَا وَأَبْنَائِنَا ۖ فَلَمَّا كُتِبَ
عَلَيْهِمُ الْقِتَالُ تَوَلَّوْا إِلَّا قَلِيلًا
مِّنْهُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٢٤٦﴾

[247] And their Prophet said to them, "Now God hath made Talut (Saul) your king, obey him and be prepared for war, under his command". They said "How shall he rule over us when we are more worthy than he to rule and he doth not possess wealth in abundance?" He said, "Verily God hath chosen him to be over you by virtue of his talents, and hath increased him in wisdom and stature; and leadership or kingship is not an office which you can give to whomsoever you like. On the other hand, it is God who delegates His authority to whom He pleaseth, and God is Liberal and Knowing."

وَقَالَ لَهُمْ نَبِيُّهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ
بَعَثَ لَكُمْ طَالُوتَ مَلِكًا ۚ قَالُوا
أَنَّىٰ يَكُونُ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ عَلَيْنَا وَ
نَحْنُ أَحَقُّ بِالْمُلْكِ مِنْهُ وَلَمْ
يُؤْتَ سَعَةً مِّنَ الْمَالِ ۚ قَالَ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَاهُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَ
زَادَهُ بَسْطَةً فِي الْعِلْمِ وَالْجِسْمِ ۖ
وَاللَّهُ يُؤْتِي مُلْكَهُ مَن يَشَاءُ ۚ
وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٤٧﴾

[248] And their Prophet said to them, "If you really want to test Saul's title to rule, then a token of it will be furnished to you. The sacred Ark which you had lost and which is in the possession of your enemies, will be brought back to you through Divine arrangement. It will be borne by angels. Therein lies an inward peace that will come upon you as the result of the victory that you will have

وَقَالَ لَهُمْ نَبِيُّهُمْ إِنَّ آيَةَ مُلْكِهِ
أَن يَأْتِيَكُمُ التَّابُوتُ فِيهِ سَكِينَةٌ
مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَبَقِيَّةٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ آلُ

over your enemy and therein also lie the relics left by the family of Moses and the family of Aaron. Truly in this is a sign for you, if indeed you are men of faith."

مُوسَىٰ وَآلُ هَارُونَ تَحْمِلُهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ ۚ
إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَةً لَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ
مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢٤٨﴾

Section 33

[249] And when Talut (Saul) marched forth with his forces, he said: "God will test you by means of a river. He who drinketh of it is not of me. But he who shall not drink of it, excepting him who takes but a handful, is indeed of me." Yet barring a few, all drank of it. And when he crossed it a good many of his followers said. "We have no strength this day against Goliath and his hosts". But they who were firm in their faith that they would meet God, said: "How often hath a small host prevailed against a large host by Divine dispensation. And God is with those who steadfastly depend upon Him."

فَلَمَّا فَصَلَ طَالُوتُ بِالْجُنُودِ قَالَ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ مُبْتَلِيكُمْ بِنَهَرٍ فَمَنْ
شَرِبَ مِنْهُ فَلَيْسَ مِنِّي وَمَنْ
لَمْ يَطْعَمْهُ فَإِنَّهُ مِنِّي إِلَّا مَنِ
اغْتَرَفَ غُرْفَةً بِيَدِهِ ۚ فَشَرِبُوا
مِنْهُ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِنْهُمْ ۚ فَلَمَّا
جَاوَزَهُ هُوَ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَهُ
قَالُوا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا الْيَوْمَ بِجَالُوتَ
وَجُنُودِهِ ۚ قَالَ الَّذِينَ يَظُنُّونَ
أَنَّهُمْ مُلَاقُو اللَّهِ كَمْ مِنْ
فِئَةٍ قَلِيلَةٍ غَلَبَتْ فِئَةً كَثِيرَةً
بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ ﴿٢٤٩﴾

[250] And when they went forth against Goliath and came face to face with his forces, they said, "Our Lord! thou seest that we are the weaker of the two forces and small in number, and the fight

وَلَمَّا بَرَزُوا لِجَالُوتَ وَجُنُودِهِ قَالُوا
رَبَّنَا أَفْرِغْ عَلَيْنَا صَبْرًا وَثَبِّتْ

is to be with those who are powerful and are large in number. So, Our Lord! invest us with due steadfastness and set our feet firm that we may not falter and turn back, and then help us against this race of unbelievers."

اَقْدَامَنَا وَانْصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكٰفِرِيْنَ ﴿٢٥٠﴾

[251] Then they routed them by the will of God, And David slew Goliath, and God gave him kingship and wisdom and taught him what He desired him to know. Should God cause not some men to keep some others in check, truly the earth would fall into a state of disorder; but God is gracious to all His creations.

فَهَزَمُوْهُمْ بِاِذْنِ اللّٰهِ ۙ وَقَتَلَ دَاوٗدُ جَالُوْتَ وَاٰتٰىهُ اللّٰهُ الْمُلْكَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَعَلَّمَهٗ مِمَّا يَشَآءُ ؕ وَلَوْلَا دَفْعُ اللّٰهِ النَّاسَ بَعْضَهُمْ بِبَعْضٍ لَّفَسَدَتِ الْاَرْضُ وَلٰكِنَّ اللّٰهَ ذُوْ فَضْلٍ عَلَى الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿٢٥١﴾

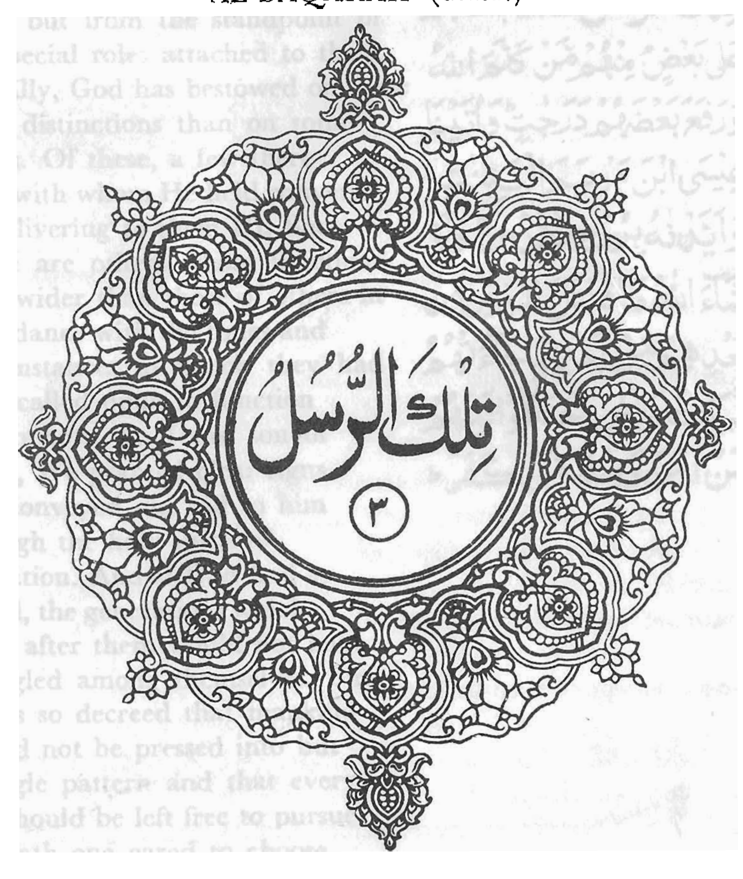
[252] O Prophet! these are the revelations of God. We rehearse them to thee in true form. Assuredly, thou art of the order of apostles!

تِلْكَ اٰيٰتُ اللّٰهِ نَتْلُوْهَا عَلَيْكَ بِالْحَقِّ ؕ وَاِنَّكَ لَمِنَ الْمُرْسَلِيْنَ ﴿٢٥٢﴾

PART III

Chapter II

AL-BAQARAH (*Contd.*)



AL-BAQARAH (*Contd.*)

[253] The Apostles! At the level of prophethood, all are of equal rank; but from the standpoint of the special roles attached to them severally, God has bestowed on some more distinctions than on some others. Of these, a few there were with whom He held converse by delivering to them His Book. There are others whose functions were wider than those of others in accordance with the times and circumstances in which they had been called upon to function as prophets. To Jesus, son of Mary, We granted clear signs and conveyed our aid to him through the holy spirit of revelation. And if God had so willed, the generations which came after them would not have wrangled among themselves. But it was so decreed that mankind should not be pressed into but a single pattern and that every one should be left free to pursue the path one cared to choose for himself. So, it so happened that mankind fell into disputes; some followed the path of belief and some of unbelief.

تِلْكَ الرُّسُلُ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ مِّنْهُم مَّن كَلَّمَ اللَّهُ وَرَفَعَ بَعْضَهُمْ دَرَجَٰتٍ وَآتَيْنَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ الْبَيِّنَٰتِ وَأَيَّدْنَٰهُ بِرُوحِ الْقُدُسِ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا اقْتَتَلَ الَّذِينَ مِن بَعْدِهِم مِّن بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْهُمُ الْبَيِّنَٰتُ وَلَٰكِنِ اخْتَلَفُوا فَمِنْهُم مَّنْ آمَنَ وَمِنْهُم مَّن كَفَرَ ط

of violence and disorder, and takes to the way of God (and peace) he has surely taken hold on a strong handle that shall not break. (He cannot then have a fall.) Remember that God is He who heareth and knoweth.

اسْتَمْسَكَ بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقَىٰ لَا انفِصَامَ لَهَا ۗ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٥٦﴾

[257] God is the guardian of those who believe. He bringeth out of darkness into light those who sincerely believe in Him. As to those who believe not, viz. the *Taghut* variety, their false deities and their mischievous agents are their guardians, who bring them out from light into darkness. These are the companions of fire; therein will they dwell.

اللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يُخْرِجُهُم مِّنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ ۖ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَوْلِيَاؤُهُمُ الطَّاغُوتُ يُخْرِجُونَهُم مِّنَ النُّورِ إِلَى الظُّلُمَاتِ ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ ۖ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ﴿٢٥٧﴾

Reference is made here to an incident in the life of Abraham which demonstrates that success attends sincere persuasion. Abraham preached truth in a land where he had none to stand by him and presented the truth before a king who was well-known for his arrogance. Alone he faced the man and succeeded in his mission.

Incidentally, the great truth is emphasised here that the call of truth always takes the form of preaching and pursuasion and never of hate and controversy. The method of the preacher of truth is not to pester his audience with subtle disquisition. On the other hand, he desires that the truth he bears should make its appeal in a straight-forward manner. When Abraham found that his first argument was too high-flown to be appreciated by the king, he offered another, such as the king could easily comprehend, and the effect was instantaneous, and the king had to yield.

SECTION 35

[258] Bethink thee of him who disputed with Abraham about his Lord on whom God had conferred a kingly state and who, puffed with power, used to question the very power of God? When Abraham said: "My Lord is He who giveth life and taketh it away," he replied, "I too give life and take it away." Abraham said: "Well! never mind! But God maketh the Sun rise in the East, wilt thou make it rise in the West?" Then the disbeliever was confounded, for God guideth not the perverted.

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِي حَاجَّ إِبْرٰهِمَ
فِي رَبِّهِ أَنْ آتٰىهُ اللّٰهُ الْمُلْكَ إِذْ
قَالَ إِبْرٰهِمُ رَبِّيَ الَّذِي يُحْيِي
وَيُمِيتُ قَالَ أَنَا أُحْيِي وَأُمِيتُ
قَالَ إِبْرٰهِمُ فَإِنَّ اللّٰهَ يَأْتِي
بِالشَّمْسِ مِنَ الْمَشْرِقِ فَأْتِ بِهَا
مِنَ الْمَغْرِبِ فَبُهِتَ الَّذِي كَفَرَ
وَاللّٰهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٢٥٨﴾

An event in the history of the Israelites illustrates the peaceful nature of missionary work carried on by their prophets. The reference is to the rebuilding of Jerusalem. There was a stage in its history when it had fallen into ruins and the Jewish community had been reduced to such straits, that no one could dream that the town would be rebuilt, but it so happened that three of the powerful monarchs of the time were so captivated by three of the prophets of the Israelites that they came to their rescue and not only revived them as a community but enabled them to rebuild their ruined town. The three kings who had come under the influence of the prophets were Cyrus, Darius and Artazerxex, and the prophets were, Daniel, Hajji and Ezra. It was due to one of these prophets that Jerusalem was rebuilt. The *Qur'ān* refers to this story of Jerusalem in the following words: "God caused him to lie dead for one hundred years".

[259] Or bethink thee likewise of him who had passed by a town

أَوْ كَالَّذِي مَرَّ عَلٰى قَرْيَةٍ وَهِيَ
خَاوِيَةٌ عَلٰى عُرُوشِهَا قَالَ

which had lain in ruins. "How shall God," said He "give it life after its death?" And God caused him to lie dead for one hundred years and then raised him to life, and asked him, "How long did you lie in this state?" He replied, "A day probably or a part of a day". God rejoined "Nay! thou didst lie for one hundred years. Now look at thy food and thy drink, they have not petrified despite the passage of time; and look on thine ass and see what its condition is. We have done all this only to make of thee an example to men, and of what you have come to know now will inspire in others the belief in God and give you insight into life. And ponder on the bones in the body, how We set them together and how we clothe them with flesh before the body develops into a full-fledged living object." When this became manifest to him he exclaimed, "I now know with certainty that without doubt God hath power over all things."

أَنّٰى يُحْيِي هٰذِهِ اللّٰهُ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا ۚ
فَأَمَاتَهُ اللّٰهُ مِائَةَ عَامٍ ثُمَّ
بَعَثَهُ ۖ قَالَ كَمْ لَبِثْتَ ۖ قَالَ
لَبِثْتُ يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ ۖ
قَالَ بَلْ لَبِثْتَ مِائَةَ عَامٍ فَانْظُرْ
إِلٰى طَعَامِكَ وَشَرَابِكَ لَمْ يَتَسَنَّهْ ۚ
وَانْظُرْ إِلٰى حِمَارِكَ ۖ وَلِنَجْعَلَكَ
آيَةً لِلنَّاسِ وَانْظُرْ إِلَى الْعِظَامِ
كَيْفَ نُنْشِزُهَا ثُمَّ نَكْسُوهَا
لَحْمًا ۖ فَلَمَّا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ ۙ قَالَ
أَعْلَمُ أَنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ
قَدِيرٌ ﴿٢٥٩﴾

A return to the way of Truth, the way of God has always given a fresh life to dead nations, and reformed and civilized those who have lived in ignorance and barbarity. The *Qur'ān* here refers to the advice offered by God to Abraham. Abraham

appeared as prophet when there was hardly a community which was prepared to pay heed to the call of Truth. Looking at the prevailing condition of society everywhere, Abraham prayed: "O Lord! show me how wilt thou transform this condition of death into one of life?" Verse 260 given below suggests the manner whereby reformation is wrought in a people's life. It points out that when birds can be trained to respond to the call of one with whom they are made familiar, cannot a wavered people, given to wild ways of living, be so trained as to respond to the call of Truth and live a new life altogether? So it happened. This preacher of Truth, Abraham, gave so good a training to wavered souls that his achievement is hailed as the mightiest of revolutions ever wrought in the history of man; so much so that generations after generations of men followed the way of life marked by him, and, despite the lapse of three thousand years, countless number of people throng even now every year in response to his old call at the House of Prayer set up by him in Mecca.

[260] And when Abraham said: O Lord! show me how thou giveth life to the dead. He said, "Hast thou no faith?" He said: "Yea! I have full faith in Thy power; but the situation before me is so hopeless that I feel perturbed and it is because of this that my soul yearns to be well assured?" He said: "Catch some four birds and make them grow familiar with thee, then place each of them on each of the hills and call them and they will come swiftly to thee, and know that God is Mighty, Wise".

وَاِذْ قَالَ اِبْرٰهٖمُ رَبِّ اَرِنِيْ كَيْفَ تُحْيِ الْمَوْتٰى ؕ قَالَ اَوَلَمْ تُؤْمِنْ ؕ قَالَ بَلٰى وَلٰكِنْ لِّيَطْمَئِنَّ قَلْبِيْ ؕ قَالَ فَخُذْ اَرْبَعَةً مِّنَ الطَّيْرِ فَصُرْهُنَّ اِلَيْكَ ثُمَّ اجْعَلْ عَلٰى كُلِّ جَبَلٍ مِّنْهُنَّ جُزْءًا ثُمَّ ادْعُهُنَّ يَاْتِيْنَكَ سَعْيًا ؕ وَاعْلَمْ اَنَّ اللّٰهَ عَزِيْزٌ حَكِيْمٌ ﴿٢٦٠﴾

SECTION 36

Here ends the subject of *Jehad* or of striving in the cause of God. The *Qur'ān* now turns to other issues of life. The *Qur'ān* makes it clear that the obligations or duties prescribed by it in respect of fasting, honest earning, *Hajj, Jehad,* marriage, divorce, the caring of orphans and the fair treatment of women-folk, the making of wills prior to death and the like, cannot be satisfactorily fulfilled by any one unless he develops in him the urge to spend out of what God had given him in the way of God or for the good of others. That is why the subject is given special attention in the *Qur'ān.*

[261] Those who spend their wealth in the way of God are like a grain of corn which puts forth seven ears, each ear containing a hundred grains; God grants a hundred-fold to those who spend out of their wealth in His way. Indeed, He multiplieth for whom He pleaseth, since He is Liberal and is cognisant of all that one does.

مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ حَبَّةٍ أَنْبَتَتْ سَبْعَ سَنَابِلَ فِي كُلِّ سُنْبُلَةٍ مِائَةُ حَبَّةٍ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يُضَاعِفُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٦١﴾

[262] Those who spend their wealth in the way of God and never brag of it thereafter, nor taunt or hurt the feelings of any one on that account, shall have their reward from their Lord; no fear shall come upon them, nor shall they grieve.

الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ لَا يُتْبِعُونَ مَا أَنْفَقُوا مَنًّا وَلَا أَذًى ۙ لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٢٦٢﴾

An act of charity born of vanity loses its value, for he who does an act of charity to be praised by others is one who really does nothing for God.

The *Qur'ān* draws pertinent similitudes from Nature to suggest how worthless is the charity which is offered with such ulterior motives. It also furnishes from the same source similitudes of good results flowing from charity offered to please God. The emphasis is on sincerity of purpose.

All that is done for the sake of show will in the end bring regret. That is the truth brought home in this section.

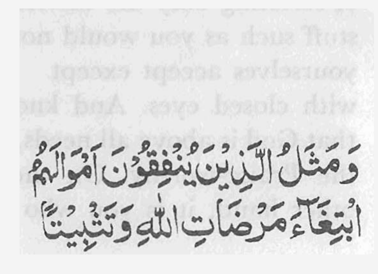
[263] A kindly word and forbearance is better than alms accompanied by taunts. And do not forget that God is above all needs, and remember that He is Forbearing as well.

قَوْلٌ مَّعْرُوفٌ وَّمَغْفِرَةٌ خَيْرٌ
مِّنْ صَدَقَةٍ يَّتْبَعُهَآ أَذًى ؕ وَ
اللّٰهُ غَنِيٌّ حَلِيْمٌ ﴿٢٦٣﴾

[264] O Muslims! Make not your alms void by bragging of it, and inflicting taunts, like him who gives to others out of his wealth only to be seen of men and believeth not in God and in the Last Day. He resembles a smooth rock with a thin coating of soil upon it wherein a seed hath been sown. On it falleth a heavy rain and leaveth it just a hard rock. So it is with those who make a show of what they call their charity. No profit shall they derive from what they do. The fact is that God doth not show the way of goodness to those who do not do a thing for God.

يٰٓأَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تُبْطِلُوْا
صَدَقٰتِكُمْ بِالْمَنِّ وَالْأَذٰى كَالَّذِيْ
يُنْفِقُ مَالَهٗ رِئَآءَ النَّاسِ وَلَا
يُؤْمِنُ بِاللّٰهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْاٰخِرِ ؕ
فَمَثَلُهٗ كَمَثَلِ صَفْوَانٍ عَلَيْهِ
تُرَابٌ فَأَصَابَهٗ وَابِلٌ فَتَرَكَهٗ
صَلْدًا ؕ لَا يَقْدِرُوْنَ عَلٰى شَيْءٍ
مِّمَّا كَسَبُوْا ؕ وَاللّٰهُ لَا يَهْدِي
الْقَوْمَ الْكٰفِرِيْنَ ﴿٢٦٤﴾

[265] On the other hand, those who spend their wealth single-mindedly from a desire



to please God, resemble a garden set upon a high ground. On it falleth a heavy rain and the garden yieldeth two-fold its fruits; and should no heavy rain fall thereon, even the dew over it sufficeth. And God watcheth over what you do.

مِّنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ كَمَثَلِ جَنَّةٍ بِرَبْوَةٍ أَصَابَهَا وَابِلٌ فَآتَتْ
أُكُلَهَا ضِعْفَيْنِ فَإِن لَّمْ يُصِبْهَا وَابِلٌ
فَطَلٌّ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٢٦٥﴾

[266] Desireth any one of you a garden of palms and vines, with streams flowing therein, in which you may have all kinds of fruit and flowers, eventually struck with a violent fiery wind and burnt down at a time when old age hath overtaken you? Mark how God maketh plain to you His signs by these illustrations that you may reflect.

أَيَوَدُّ أَحَدُكُمْ أَن تَكُونَ لَهُ
جَنَّةٌ مِّن نَّخِيلٍ وَأَعْنَابٍ
تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ لَهُ
فِيهَا مِن كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ وَأَصَابَهُ
الْكِبَرُ وَلَهُ ذُرِّيَّةٌ ضُعَفَاءُ
فَأَصَابَهَا إِعْصَارٌ فِيهِ نَارٌ
فَاحْتَرَقَتْ كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ
لَكُمُ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢٦٦﴾

Section 37

Do not offer in charity anything which you have discarded.

[267] O Muslims! Give to others in charity of only the good things which you have earned and also of that which We have brought forth for you out of the earth, and do not think of selecting only the useless stuff such as you would not yourselves accept except with closed eyes. And know that God is above all needs, the Praise-worthy. On the other hand, it is you who are

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنفِقُوا
مِن طَيِّبَاتِ مَا كَسَبْتُمْ وَمِمَّا
أَخْرَجْنَا لَكُم مِّنَ الْأَرْضِ وَلَا
تَيَمَّمُوا الْخَبِيثَ مِنْهُ تُنفِقُونَ
وَلَسْتُم بِآخِذِيهِ إِلَّا أَن تُغْمِضُوا

in need of salvation which s unattainable except hrough righteous living.

دِيهِ وَاعْلَمُوٓا أَنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ ﴿٢٦٧﴾

It is for man who cares to live a happy life to distinguish between what is good for him and what is not. He who gets the right insight is indeed blessed.

[268] Satan frightens you of poverty and therefore inveigles you into indecent means of livelihood; but God invites you to a way along which He holdeth out to you the prospect of His pardon and prosperity. And remember that God is indeed liberal, and knoweth what you need.

الشَّيْطَٰنُ يَعِدُكُمُ الْفَقْرَ وَيَأْمُرُكُم بِالْفَحْشَآءِ ۖ وَاللَّهُ يَعِدُكُم مَّغْفِرَةً مِّنْهُ وَفَضْلًا ۗ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٦٨﴾

[269] He giveth insight to whom He will, and he to whom insight is given hath had ample fortune given him. But none will understand this except men of insight.

يُؤْتِي الْحِكْمَةَ مَن يَشَآءُ ۚ وَمَن يُؤْتَ الْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ أُوتِيَ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا ۗ وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّآ أُولُوا الْأَلْبَٰبِ ﴿٢٦٩﴾

[270] And mark that whatever you spend in charity and whatever offerings you offer, of a truth, God knoweth. But they who fail to fulfil obligations shall have no helpers.

وَمَآ أَنفَقْتُم مِّن نَّفَقَةٍ أَوْ نَذَرْتُم مِّن نَّذْرٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُهُ ۗ وَمَا لِلظَّٰلِمِينَ مِنْ أَنصَارٍ ﴿٢٧٠﴾

Charity given only to show off is discouraged. But that does not mean that you should make a fetish of secrecy in charity. What is expected of him who offers charity is sincerity of purpose. It should not take the form of a show. To give anything in charity is a necessary concomitant of devotion to God. The act does not imply any favour done to anybody, nor does it call for any formal approbation.

[271] It is quite right to give alms openly if only you do not intend to make a show of it; but to give charity without publicity will be decidedly better for you; it will wash off some of your sins,—and remember whatever you do cannot be concealed from God. He is aware of what you do.

إِنْ تُبْدُوا الصَّدَقٰتِ فَنِعِمَّا هِيَ ۚ
وَإِنْ تُخْفُوهَا وَتُؤْتُوهَا الْفُقَرَآءَ
فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ ۚ وَيُكَفِّرُ عَنْكُمْ
مِّنْ سَيِّاٰتِكُمْ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ ﴿٢٧١﴾

[272] O Prophet! To make these people take to the right path is not thine affair. It is God who puts on the right path him whom He pleaseth. So, tell them that whatever they give to others in charity will eventually redound to their own credit, provided they do so to seek the pleasure of God. Tell them that there is a law of God at work in such matters, and that is, that whatever is given in charity will be measured back to him in full, and that there will be no defrauding in the transaction.

لَيْسَ عَلَيْكَ هُدٰىهُمْ وَلٰكِنَّ اللّٰهَ
يَهْدِي مَنْ يَّشَآءُ ۗ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا
مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَلِاَنْفُسِكُمْ ۗ وَمَا تُنْفِقُونَ
إِلَّا ابْتِغَآءَ وَجْهِ اللّٰهِ ۗ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا
مِنْ خَيْرٍ يُّوَفَّ إِلَيْكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ
لَا تُظْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٧٢﴾

(1) One of the purposes of issuing the injunction to give to others out of one's wealth is to make provision for those who, giving up their own occupations, are engaged in the service of Truth; they have no independent means of living. Day and night, they are engaged in the work of social, spiritual and moral uplift of others. These social workers are in a state of indigence, and yet they put on the visage of those who are

above want. Since it is the duty of society to look after such workers in the cause of God, the *Qur'ān* draws special attention to their needs.

(2) The emphasis is laid on their needs for the simple reason that charity goes very often to the clever professional beggar and not to the truly needy. It is suggested, therefore, that those who are in a position to offer charity should seek out such people.

[273] Give in charity to the poor that are beleagured in the cause of God and are hindered thereby from going about the world to earn their living. He who knoweth them not, mistaketh them for well-to-do folk because of their sense of self-respect. Thou wouldst know them by their visage; they ask not of men with importunity; and bear in mind that God will assuredly know whatever you may give in charity such people.

لِلْفُقَرَآءِ الَّذِينَ أُحْصِرُوا فِي سَبِيلِ
اللَّهِ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ ضَرْبًا فِي
الْأَرْضِ يَحْسَبُهُمُ الْجَاهِلُ
أَغْنِيَآءَ مِنَ التَّعَفُّفِ تَعْرِفُهُم
بِسِيمَٰهُمْ لَا يَسْـَٔلُونَ النَّاسَ
إِلْحَافًا وَمَا تُنفِقُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ
فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٧٣﴾

SECTION 38

[274] They who give away of their wealth in charity by night and by day, in private and in public, shall certainly have their reward with their Lord: No fear shall come upon them, neither shall they grieve.

الَّذِينَ يُنفِقُونَ أَمْوَٰلَهُم بِالَّيْلِ
وَالنَّهَارِ سِرًّا وَعَلَانِيَةً فَلَهُمْ
أَجْرُهُمْ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ
عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٢٧٤﴾

The urge to give to the needy out of one's own earnings or wealth is sustained steadily only when one puts a check

on tendencies which run counter to it. So while recommending the use of one's wealth for the good of others, the *Qur'ān* takes care to prohibit usury which was practised in Arabia as elsewhere.

Islam desires to promote fellow-feeling between man and man. So, it calls on its followers to attend to the needs of the needy and even regard their needs as their own. But the urge for profit-making by usury runs counter to fellow-feeling. The usurer exploits the distress of the man in need only to increase his wealth. Selfishness of this nature if left unchecked, develops into tyranny. The *Qur'ān* likens this mentality to epilepsy which the superstitious Arabs regarded as the touch of Satan. The simile is offered to suggest that usury deadens all tenderness in man and develops in him a sort of lust for money.

Further, the system of lending money on interest tends to concentrate wealth in but few hands. Islam recommends the increase of wealth by all fair means; but it enjoins that it be distributed equitably among the members of society. The injunction runs: "God desireth abolition of interest and encourageth spending for the good of others". The idea is to keep every member of society free of material want.

[275] They who take to usury shall not stand aright even as one afflicted by the touch of Satan (or by epilepsy). (They should remember that such is the result of oppressive exploitation of the weak.) Such people contend that selling is just like lending monies on interest, whereas God regards selling lawful and usury unlawful, since the two cannot produce the same result. Then he who abstaineth after this advice has come to him from his Lord,

اَلَّذِيْنَ يَاْكُلُوْنَ الرِّبٰوا لَا يَقُوْمُوْنَ
اِلَّا كَمَا يَقُوْمُ الَّذِىْ يَتَخَبَّطُهُ
الشَّيْطٰنُ مِنَ الْمَسِّ ذٰلِكَ

بِاَنَّهُمْ قَالُوْٓا اِنَّمَا الْبَيْعُ مِثْلُ
الرِّبٰوا وَاَحَلَّ اللّٰهُ الْبَيْعَ وَحَرَّمَ
الرِّبٰوا فَمَنْ جَآءَهٗ مَوْعِظَةٌ مِّنْ
رَّبِّهٖ فَانْتَهٰى فَلَهٗ مَا سَلَفَ وَاَمْرُهٗٓ

may retain what he has held in the past and his affair shall be with God. But they who resume the practice shall be the companions of Fire; therein shall they remain.

إِلَى اللَّهِ وَمَنْ عَادَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ
النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ﴿٢٧٥﴾

[276] God desireth abolition of interest and encourageth spending for the good of others. God doth not like those who cannot appreciate the gifts of God and feel thankful to Him for what hath been given to them.

يَمْحَقُ اللَّهُ الرِّبَا وَيُرْبِي الصَّدَقَاتِ
وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ كَفَّارٍ أَثِيمٍ ﴿٢٧٦﴾

[277] They who believe and do what is right and observe prayer and pay the poor-due, shall have their reward with their Lord; fear shall not come upon them, neither shall they grieve.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ
وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوُا الزَّكَاةَ لَهُمْ
أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ
عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٢٧٧﴾

[278] O Muslims! Fear ye God and forego all balances of interest, if you are indeed Muslims.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَذَرُوا
مَا بَقِيَ مِنَ الرِّبَا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢٧٨﴾

[279] But if ye do it not, then be prepared for war with God and His Prophet; for, that is the only course left if you disobey a clear commandment; but if you withdraw your claim, then, you shall have your principal amounts and not the interest thereon, so that you wrong not, nor be wronged.

فَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلُوا فَأْذَنُوا بِحَرْبٍ
مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَإِنْ تُبْتُمْ
فَلَكُمْ رُءُوسُ أَمْوَالِكُمْ لَا
تَظْلِمُونَ وَلَا تُظْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٧٩﴾

[280] But if one be in straitened circumstances and cannot at once repay the loan advanced to him, then let there be a respite till things

وَإِنْ كَانَ ذُو عُسْرَةٍ فَنَظِرَةٌ
إِلَىٰ مَيْسَرَةٍ وَأَنْ تَصَدَّقُوا

go easy for him; but if you remit it by way of charity, it will be good for you if you but understand.

خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٨٠﴾

[281] Beware of the day on which ye shall return to God; then, every one shall receive in full what he hath worked for, and no injustice shall be done to any.

وَاتَّقُوا يَوْمًا تُرْجَعُونَ فِيهِ إِلَى اللَّهِ ثُمَّ تُوَفَّىٰ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٨١﴾

Section 39

Since usury was a form of transaction, the *Qur'ān* now turns to the subject of transactions in general and shows the way to avoid the irregularities which people used to commit out of ignorance and lack of morality in business.

[282] O ye who believe! When ye contract a debt for a fixed period, let it be committed to writing, and let a scribe write it down justly between you, and let not a scribe refuse to write in the form God hath fixed for him. So let him write. Let him who incurs the liability dictate and let him fear God, his Lord, and not diminish aught thereof. But if the one who oweth, be witless or infirm or if he be not able to dictate himself, let his guardian dictate with fairness and let two witnesses be called from among your men, but if both be not men, then a man and two women of those ye

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا تَدَايَنتُم بِدَيْنٍ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى فَاكْتُبُوهُ وَلْيَكْتُب بَّيْنَكُمْ كَاتِبٌ بِالْعَدْلِ وَلَا يَأْبَ كَاتِبٌ أَن يَكْتُبَ كَمَا عَلَّمَهُ اللَّهُ فَلْيَكْتُبْ وَلْيُمْلِلِ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِ الْحَقُّ وَلْيَتَّقِ اللَّهَ رَبَّهُ وَلَا يَبْخَسْ مِنْهُ شَيْئًا فَإِن كَانَ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِ الْحَقُّ سَفِيهًا أَوْ ضَعِيفًا أَوْ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُ أَن يُمِلَّ هُوَ فَلْيُمْلِلْ وَلِيُّهُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَاسْتَشْهِدُوا شَهِيدَيْنِ مِن رِّجَالِكُمْ فَإِن لَّمْ يَكُونَا

approve, as witnesses, so that, should one of the two women misstate, the other might cause her to recollect; and let not the witnesses refuse to give evidence, when summoned and do not show slackness in writing down the transactions, be it large or small, during the term of contract. This is the fairest procedure in the sight of God, and the most suitable for evidence, and the best for avoidance of doubt. But if it is a matter of give and take among you on the spot, it is not obligatory on you that you should write it down. And have witnesses when you have any trade dealings. And let no harm be done either to the scribe or the witness, for, it will be wickedness on your part if you do so; and fear God. God giveth you instructions, and God knoweth everything.

[283] If ye be on a journey and do not find a scribe, let pledges be taken. But if one of you trust the other, let the one who is trusted fulfil his trust, and let him fear God, his Lord.

And ye shall not hide evidence; for the heart of him who hideth it is verily sinful and God knoweth all that ye do.

رَجُلَيْنِ فَرَجُلٌ وَّامْرَاَتٰنِ مِمَّنْ
تَرْضَوْنَ مِنَ الشُّهَدَآءِ اَنْ تَضِلَّ
اِحْدٰىهُمَا فَتُذَكِّرَ اِحْدٰىهُمَا
الْاُخْرٰى وَلَا يَاْبَ الشُّهَدَآءُ اِذَا
مَا دُعُوْا وَلَا تَسْـَٔمُوْٓا اَنْ تَكْتُبُوْهُ
صَغِيْرًا اَوْ كَبِيْرًا اِلٰٓى اَجَلِهٖ
ذٰلِكُمْ اَقْسَطُ عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ وَاَقْوَمُ
لِلشَّهَادَةِ وَاَدْنٰٓى اَلَّا تَرْتَابُوْٓا
اِلَّآ اَنْ تَكُوْنَ تِجَارَةً حَاضِرَةً
تُدِيْرُوْنَهَا بَيْنَكُمْ فَلَيْسَ
عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ اَلَّا تَكْتُبُوْهَا
وَاَشْهِدُوْٓا اِذَا تَبَايَعْتُمْ وَلَا
يُضَآرَّ كَاتِبٌ وَّلَا شَهِيْدٌ وَاِنْ
تَفْعَلُوْا فَاِنَّهٗ فُسُوْقٌ بِكُمْ
وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ وَيُعَلِّمُكُمُ اللّٰهُ
وَاللّٰهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيْمٌ ﴿٢٨٢﴾
وَاِنْ كُنْتُمْ عَلٰى سَفَرٍ وَّلَمْ تَجِدُوْا
كَاتِبًا فَرِهٰنٌ مَّقْبُوْضَةٌ فَاِنْ
اَمِنَ بَعْضُكُمْ بَعْضًا فَلْيُؤَدِّ
الَّذِى اؤْتُمِنَ اَمَانَتَهٗ وَلْيَتَّقِ
اللّٰهَ رَبَّهٗ وَلَا تَكْتُمُوا الشَّهَادَةَ
وَمَنْ يَّكْتُمْهَا فَاِنَّهٗٓ اٰثِمٌ قَلْبُهٗ
وَاللّٰهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ عَلِيْمٌ ﴿٢٨٣﴾

[284] God's, whatsover is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth! And whether ye disclose that which is in your minds or conceal it, God will call you to account for it, and thereafter He will forgive whom He pleaseth, and whom He pleaseth will He chastise. And God hath power over everything

لِلّٰهِ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْاَرْضِ
وَاِنْ تُبْدُوْا مَا فِيْٓ اَنْفُسِكُمْ اَوْ
تُخْفُوْهُ يُحَاسِبْكُمْ بِهِ اللّٰهُ فَيَغْفِرُ
لِمَنْ يَّشَآءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ
وَاللّٰهُ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ ﴿٢٨٤﴾

In the following passage with which tne chapter closes, the *Qur'ān* reverts to the subject of belief and righteous activity with which the chapter started.

[285] The Apostle hath believed in that which hath come down from his Lord, as have the faithful. Every one of them hath believed in God and His angels and His Books and His apostles. The demand of their faith is to affirm that they make no distinction between any of His apostles, or to give recognition to some and deny recognition to others or to recognise all but one particular apostle. They affirm that all are apostles of God. These are the people who, when the messenger of God calls them, say: "We have heard and we have obeyed. May Thy protection be vouchsafed to us, O Lord! for, we know that it is to Thee that we are to return".

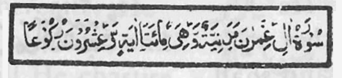
اٰمَنَ الرَّسُوْلُ بِمَآ اُنْزِلَ اِلَيْهِ
مِنْ رَّبِّهٖ وَالْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ كُلٌّ
اٰمَنَ بِاللّٰهِ وَمَلٰٓئِكَتِهٖ وَكُتُبِهٖ
وَرُسُلِهٖ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ اَحَدٍ
مِّنْ رُّسُلِهٖ وَقَالُوْا سَمِعْنَا
وَاَطَعْنَا غُفْرَانَكَ رَبَّنَا وَاِلَيْكَ
الْمَصِيْرُ ﴿٢٨٥﴾

[286] God doth not lay a responsibility on any one beyond his capacity. He shall enjoy the good that he hath worked for and shall bear the evil to acquire which he hath laboured. The prayer of those truly devoted to God is always this: "Our Lord! Call us not to account if we have forgotten to do anything or have fallen into error. Our Lord! Lay not on us a burden such as Thou hadst laid on those gone before us. Our Lord! Lay not on us that which we cannot bear except with hardship, and overlook our faults; and forgive us, and have mercy on us. Thou art our Protector; help us then against the oppressors who have denied Thee."

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللّٰهُ نَفْسًا اِلَّا وُسْعَهَا
لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَعَلَيْهَا مَا اكْتَسَبَتْ
رَبَّنَا لَا تُؤَاخِذْنَا اِنْ نَّسِيْنَا اَوْ
اَخْطَاْنَا ۚ رَبَّنَا وَلَا تَحْمِلْ عَلَيْنَا
اِصْرًا كَمَا حَمَلْتَهٗ عَلَى الَّذِيْنَ
مِنْ قَبْلِنَا ۚ رَبَّنَا وَلَا تُحَمِّلْنَا مَا
لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا بِهٖ ۚ وَاعْفُ عَنَّا ۗ
وَاغْفِرْ لَنَا ۗ وَارْحَمْنَا ۗ اَنْتَ
مَوْلٰىنَا فَانْصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ
الْكٰفِرِيْنَ ۝٢٨٦

CHAPTER III

ĀL-IMRĀN



SECTION 1

God is The Living. There is neither death nor decay for Him. He is the self-subsisting Sustainer. These two attributes of Him argue that He should provide all the necessities of human life. The necessities of man are of two kinds—physical and spiritual. Provision has therefore been made for the one, as for the other.

To meet the spiritual needs of man, two things are provided. One is styled *Al-Kitab*, the other *Al-Furqan*. *Al-Kitab*, literally the Book, is the term used for 'Revelation' from God or what is revealed by Him for the guidance of man in order that he might live a good life. *Al-Furqan* is that intellectual talent in man which enables him to understand the Divine Revelation and to accept it. The first is the teaching, the other is the talent to assimilate it. The one is generative in quality, the other receptive.

The law of life is that those who run counter to the teachings furnished by Revelation and do not profit by their sense of understanding and discrimination, inevitably meet with failure in life and suffer in consequence.

ال عمران ٣ — تلك الرسل ٣

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

[1] Alif, Lam, Mim!

[2] God! There is none worthy of worship except He, the Living, the self-subsisting Sustainer.

الٓمّٓ ۝١ اللّٰهُ لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّوْمُ ۝٢

[3] He hath sent down to thee the Book, bearing the Truth, and confirming the Scriptures which preceded it. Prior to this did He send down the *Torah* and the

نَزَّلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتٰبَ بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَ

Evangel for man's guidance, and sent down the Criterion.

[4] Verily, for those who reject the revelations of God, there shall be a severe chastisement. And God is Mighty, the Awarder of punishments.

[5] God! There is certainly nothing in the earth or in the heavens that is hidden from Him!

[6] He it is who fashioneth you in your mother's wombs as He pleaseth. There is none worthy of worship except He, the Mighty the Wise.

أَنزَلَ التَّوْرَاةَ وَالْإِنجِيلَ ﴿٣﴾ مِن قَبْلُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَأَنزَلَ الْفُرْقَانَ ۗ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ ذُو انتِقَامٍ ﴿٤﴾ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَخْفَىٰ عَلَيْهِ شَيْءٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَاءِ ﴿٥﴾ هُوَ الَّذِي يُصَوِّرُكُمْ فِي الْأَرْحَامِ كَيْفَ يَشَاءُ ۚ لَا إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٦﴾

The teachings of the *Qur'ān* have been expressed in two forms. One is styled *Muhkam* the other *Mutashabih*. What fall under *Muhkam* are fundamental to Islam and are basic in character, and for that reason are expressed in plain and intelligible language, as for example statements touching the unity of God and prophethood and commandments touching things lawful and unlawful. What come under *Mutashabih* are all those aspects of life which are beyond the reach of the human intellect, and cannot be perceived through the senses, or brought within the purview of positive knowledge. These aspects relate to the being of God, the life after death, the nature of reward and punishment and similar subjects. Reference to subjects such as these is made more or less in a figurative language, not totally incomprehensible for man. He who ventures upon any disquisition in these subjects very often involves himself in varying misapprehensions. So men of right understanding regard the *Muhkamat* or the 'perspicuous' as what primarily matter in the field of thought and action and do not run after the *Mutashabihath* or the figurative, since no probe into them will bear fruit. They realise through their knowledge and insight that the reality behind the *Mutashabihath* is beyond the reach

of human apprehension. These *Mutashabihath* are certainly not repugnant to the intellect of man, but they decidedly are beyond its grasp. Man can believe in them; but he cannot catch their reality. So people of right understanding say, "We believe in all that the Book of God contains", and go no further. On the other hand, those who are perverse, entangle themselves in the *Mutashabihath* and thwart the development of faith in them.

[7] He it is, O Prophet! Who hath sent down to thee the Book; some verses of it are perspicuous—they form the core of the Book—and some are figurative. But they whose minds are perverse take to the figurative seeking discord and crave to give them their own interpretation, although none knoweth their true interpretation except God, since these relate to a state of existence which is beyond the comprehension of man. But men of right understanding say, "We believe in it; the whole of it is from our Lord". But none will understand these except those gifted with insight.

هُوَ الَّذِيْٓ اَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتٰبَ
مِنْهُ اٰيٰتٌ مُّحْكَمٰتٌ هُنَّ اُمُّ
الْكِتٰبِ وَاُخَرُ مُتَشٰبِهٰتٌ فَاَمَّا
الَّذِيْنَ فِيْ قُلُوْبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ
فَيَتَّبِعُوْنَ مَا تَشَابَهَ مِنْهُ ابْتِغَآءَ
الْفِتْنَةِ وَابْتِغَآءَ تَاْوِيْلِهٖ وَمَا
يَعْلَمُ تَاْوِيْلَهٗٓ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ وَالرّٰسِخُوْنَ
فِي الْعِلْمِ يَقُوْلُوْنَ اٰمَنَّا بِهٖ كُلٌّ
مِّنْ عِنْدِ رَبِّنَا وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ
اِلَّآ اُولُوا الْاَلْبَابِ ۝٧

[8] Those who understand say, "Our Lord! Suffer not our hearts to swerve, once thou hast shown us the path, and favour us with Thy grace. Verily, Thou, Thou alone art the Giver.

رَبَّنَا لَا تُزِغْ قُلُوْبَنَا بَعْدَ اِذْ
هَدَيْتَنَا وَهَبْ لَنَا مِنْ لَّدُنْكَ
رَحْمَةً اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ الْوَهَّابُ ۝٨

[9] Our Lord! Whether or not the things of the world to come

رَبَّنَآ اِنَّكَ جَامِعُ النَّاسِ لِيَوْمٍ

لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُخْلِفُ الْمِيعَادَ ⑨

are comprehended aright by us, this at any rate is certain that Thou surely will gather mankind one day; there is no doubt about it. In fact this is thy promise. Surely God never goeth against His promise."

Those who have maliciously opposed the teachings of the Book (*Al-Qur'ān*) have simply followed the method of the people of Pharoah who had set themselves against Moses; and the time is not far off when they also will meet the consequences which the people of Pharaoh were fated to meet. The world will certainly come to know who, in reality will triumph in the end.

Section 2

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَن تُغْنِيَ عَنْهُمْ أَمْوَالُهُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُهُم مِّنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا ۖ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمْ وَقُودُ النَّارِ ⑩

[10] Surely nothing shall avail n that day those who deny the essage—neither their wealth of which they may be proud, nor their children. These! these shall form fuel for the Fire,

كَدَأْبِ آلِ فِرْعَوْنَ وَالَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ ۚ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا فَأَخَذَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِذُنُوبِهِمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ⑪

[11] Even as did the people of Pharoah and those who went before them and treated Our signs as false. God laid hold on them for their sins, and God is severe in chastisement.

قُل لِّلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا سَتُغْلَبُونَ وَتُحْشَرُونَ إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ ۚ وَبِئْسَ الْمِهَادُ ⑫

[12] O Prophet! Say to those who have denied the message, "Anon shall ye be worsted by the call of Truth, and to Hell shall ye be driven,—to a wretched bed indeed!"

The battle of Badr marked the beginning of the last phase of the Prophet's mission. The circumstances which eventually led to this may be recalled. It was when the persecutions of the Meccans had assumed a distinctly virulent form that the Prophet decided to migrate from there and betake himself to Medina. But the Quraish of Mecca would not give him rest even there. The very next year after the Prophet's migration, they chose to collect a large force and attack Medina. In self-defence, the followers of the Prophet at Medina came out of the city to meet the foe and had an engagement with them in the vicinity of a well called Badr. The Muslims were but 313 in number and the enemy thrice their strength. But Divine help gave the Muslims a decisive victory. It was an utter defeat for the enemy.

Had the enemy the talent to read the writing on the wall, this defeat of their's would have been taken to heart.

[13] There was assuredly a meaning for you in the encounter between the two hosts at Badr, one fighting in the cause of God and to uphold His truth and the other fighting against it. They (the Muslims) beheld them with their own eyes to be clearly twice their number; still they triumphed, since God lends His help to strengthen whom He will; and in this lay truly a lesson for men of insight.



The followers of the faith are advised not to feel worried over the lack of adequate material resources. Faith and action form the real wealth of a people. If these are assured, all else that matters in worldly life will come forth automatically.

One may possess all that may be expected to contribute to one's comfort. But what really matters in life is the character one develops through right beliefs and right actions.

[14] Fair-seeming to men is the love of pleasures derived from women, sons, hoarded treasures of gold and silver, horses of mark, cattle and corn-fields. These are the things to enjoy in the life of this world. God! with Him lies a goodly home to return to.

زُيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ حُبُّ الشَّهَوٰتِ مِنَ النِّسَآءِ وَالْبَنِيْنَ وَالْقَنَاطِيْرِ الْمُقَنْطَرَةِ مِنَ الذَّهَبِ وَالْفِضَّةِ وَالْخَيْلِ الْمُسَوَّمَةِ وَالْاَنْعَامِ وَالْحَرْثِ ذٰلِكَ مَتَاعُ الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا وَاللّٰهُ عِنْدَهٗ حُسْنُ الْمَاٰبِ ﴿١٤﴾

[15] Say: Shall I tell you of things better than these? The righteous shall have from their Lord gardens in which streams of water flow. Therein they shall dwell and have companions of stainless purity and the pleasure of God; for God knows those devoted to Him—

قُلْ اَؤُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِخَيْرٍ مِّنْ ذٰلِكُمْ لِلَّذِيْنَ اتَّقَوْا عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ جَنّٰتٌ تَجْرِيْ مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْاَنْهٰرُ خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهَا وَاَزْوَاجٌ مُّطَهَّرَةٌ وَّرِضْوَانٌ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ وَاللّٰهُ بَصِيْرٌ بِالْعِبَادِ ﴿١٥﴾

[16] Those who say: "Our Lord! We believe, pardon us our sins. Save us from the chastisement of Fire."

رَبَّنَآ اِنَّنَآ اٰمَنَّا فَاغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوْبَنَا وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ ﴿١٦﴾

[17] Those who are steadfast in trials, and are truthful and lowly, and charitable and pray for forgiveness each early dawn.

اَلصّٰبِرِيْنَ وَالصّٰدِقِيْنَ وَالْقٰنِتِيْنَ وَالْمُنْفِقِيْنَ وَالْمُسْتَغْفِرِيْنَ بِالْاَسْحَارِ ﴿١٧﴾

The way of life prescribed by God is in conformity to the Divine law of balance at work in the Universe. A comprehension of this balance in Nature is obtainable by a study of the evidences with which man is surrounded. The *Qur'ān* refers specifically to three of these. One is the system of revelation

through which the truth is brought home to mankind. The second is that body of forces at work both in the earth and the skies which the *Qur'ān* styles as *malayik*, and the third is the insight of the learned. These three evidences demonstrate that the entire Universe is sustained by one supreme Being, who holds it in a balanced order.

The way of life enjoined on man from the very beginning has been but one and the same, the way of life styled Al-Islam. Every leader of men in every age hath offered it to men and enjoined on them not to differ therein.

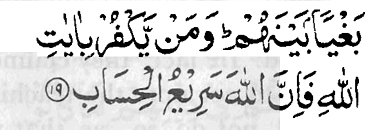
The differences which arose among the Jews and the Christians resulting in their breaking up into different groups were due to their turning away from this basic way of life.

[18] God bears witness that there is none worthy of worship, except Himself and that it is He who upholds the entire Universe in a balanced order, and so bear witness the angels and so do men of learning endowed with mental equipoise. There is none worthy of worship but He, the Mighty, the Wise.

شَهِدَ اللّٰهُ اَنَّهٗ لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ ۙ وَالْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ وَاُولُوا الْعِلْمِ قَآئِمًا بِالْقِسْطِ ؕ لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ الْعَزِيْزُ الْحَكِيْمُ ﴿١٨﴾

[19] Without doubt, the way of life acceptable to God is Al-Islam (the way of devotion to the Divine will). And they to whom the Scriptures had been given, differed (not because they had been shown any other way or because there could be any other way; they differed) only after the way of Islam had been shown to them, and this they did through mutual jealousy. And remember

اِنَّ الدِّيْنَ عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ الْاِسْلَامُ ۟ وَمَا اخْتَلَفَ الَّذِيْنَ اُوْتُوا الْكِتٰبَ اِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَآءَهُمُ الْعِلْمُ



whosoever denieth the injunctions of God—then God will surely not be slack in reckoning with.

What the Jews and the Christians are asked to admit is that the basis of religion lies in devotion to God. Should they admit it, then all dispute should be at an end, for that is the quintessence of Islam. On the other hand, should they not admit this, then no argument or remonstrance will avail.

فَإِنْ حَآجُّوكَ فَقُلْ أَسْلَمْتُ وَجْهِيَ
لِلَّهِ وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَنِ ۗ وَقُل لِّلَّذِينَ
أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ وَالْأُمِّيِّينَ ءَأَسْلَمْتُمْ ۚ
فَإِنْ أَسْلَمُوا فَقَدِ اهْتَدَوا ۖ وَّإِن
تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْكَ الْبَلَاغُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ
بَصِيرٌ بِالْعِبَادِ ﴿٢٠﴾

[20] So, if they dispute with thee, say: "I have entirely resigned myself to God, and so have those who follow me". And say to those who were given the Book, and to the Arabs who had not received the Book, "Do ye also resign yourselves to God?" If they do resign, they are in the right path and there is no occasion for a dispute with them; but if they decline, and regard their own groupism as the true religion then, no amount of good advice will avail with them. Your function is after all but to preach, and God is cognizant of what his servants do.

SECTION 3

Drawing attention to the wrong way of life to which the jews had taken to as a community, the *Qur'ān* observes that no hope could be entertained of a people who had lost every sense of justice and truth and were addicted to excesses.

The Jewish scribes knew that they had been given the Book of God. In fact, they claimed to believe therein. But when asked to act upto the teachings contained in the Book, they would not do so, as that would go against their personal interests and evil desires.

The Jews believed that salvation was reserved for them and that they would never be thrown into Hell. They hardly realised that the law of salvation did not take into account to what group one belonged or what creed one followed. Salvation was a reward of an implicit faith in God and righteous living.

[21] As for those who disregard the directions of God and slay His prophets unjustly and slay also those who enjoin justice and fair dealings among them, announce to such as these that they have no alternative left for them other than a painful chastisement.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْفُرُونَ بِآيٰتِ اللّٰهِ وَيَقْتُلُونَ النَّبِيّٖنَ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ وَّيَقْتُلُونَ الَّذِينَ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْقِسْطِ مِنَ النَّاسِ فَبَشِّرْهُم بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ﴿٢١﴾

[22] These are they whose works shall come to naught in this world and in the next, and there shall be none to help them.

أُولٰٓئِكَ الَّذِينَ حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْاٰخِرَةِ وَمَا لَهُم مِّن نّٰصِرِينَ ﴿٢٢﴾

[23] O Prophet! Hast thou not noticed those who have been given a portion of the Book? Their learned men are summoned to the Book of God to settle their differences. But a party of them withdraw and these are a people who have turned away from the Book of God.

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا ... مِّنَ الْكِتٰبِ يُدْعَوْنَ إِلٰى كِتٰبِ اللّٰهِ لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ يَتَوَلّٰى فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُمْ وَهُم مُّعْرِضُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

[24] This because they said: "Fire shall not touch us except for certain days; we are a people already redeemed. If perchance any of us

ذٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا لَن تَمَسَّنَا

is thrown into the Fire, we shall not be thrown by way of punishment. We shall be put in only to cleanse ourselves of any signs of sin that might be attached to us." It is wishful thinking of this nature which has deluded them in their faith.

النَّارُ إِلَّا أَيَّامًا مَّعْدُودَٰتٍ ۖ
وَغَرَّهُمْ فِي دِينِهِم مَّا كَانُوا
يَفْتَرُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

[25] But what will be their condition when We shall gather them together on the Day of Resurrection, of which there is no doubt, when every one shall be paid what one had worked for, and none shall be dealt with unjustly.

فَكَيْفَ إِذَا جَمَعْنَٰهُمْ لِيَوْمٍ لَّا رَيْبَ
فِيهِ وَوُفِّيَتْ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ
وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾

The issue between the true and the false cannot be left over to the day of Resurrection. Even in the life of this world the issue is resolved. He who has equipped himself for right living prospers; and he who runs counter to the way of truth has no strength to stand and has eventually to fall.

[26] O Prophet! Leave your affairs to God and say: "O God! Lord of authority! thou givest authority to whom thou wilt and thou takest away authority from whom thou wilt! Thou exaltest whom thou wilt, and whom thou wilt thou dost abase. In thy hand is all good! Verily, thou hast power over everything.

قُلِ اللَّهُمَّ مَٰلِكَ الْمُلْكِ تُؤْتِي
الْمُلْكَ مَن تَشَاءُ وَتَنزِعُ الْمُلْكَ
مِمَّن تَشَاءُ وَتُعِزُّ مَن تَشَاءُ وَ
تُذِلُّ مَن تَشَاءُ ۖ بِيَدِكَ الْخَيْرُ ۖ
إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٢٦﴾

[27] Thou causest the night to pass into the day and causest

تُولِجُ اللَّيْلَ فِي النَّهَارِ وَتُولِجُ

the day to pass into the night. Thou bringest the living out of the dead, and thou bringest the dead out of the living, and thou givest sustenance to whom thou wilt without measure."

النَّهَارَ فِي الَّيْلِ وَتُخْرِجُ الْحَيَّ مِنَ الْمَيِّتِ وَتُخْرِجُ الْمَيِّتَ مِنَ الْحَيِّ وَتَرْزُقُ مَنْ تَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ﴿٢٧﴾

Since the time has now arrived to take decisions, the followers of the Faith were counselled to be up and doing and to show no weakness in the pursuit of their mission. What was of primary importance to them was that they should not give to their own personal interests preference over the interests of the community and should not choose friends from the enemy camp. The situation was serious. It was possible to distinguish easily between friend and foe. It had become imperative for every one to choose his side; and once the choice was made, he had to adhere to the side chosen and abstain from keeping secret contacts with the other.

[28] Let not believers take for friends unbelievers. Whoso shall do this, shall have nothing from God, unless one chooses to guard himself against any harm from them. But do not forget that you have to beware of God also, and remember also that eventually you have all to return to Him.

لَا يَتَّخِذِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الْكٰفِرِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ مِنْ دُونِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۚ وَمَنْ يَّفْعَلْ ذٰلِكَ فَلَيْسَ مِنَ اللّٰهِ فِي شَيْءٍ إِلَّا أَنْ تَتَّقُوا مِنْهُمْ تُقٰىةً ۗ وَيُحَذِّرُكُمُ اللّٰهُ نَفْسَهُ ۗ وَإِلَى اللّٰهِ الْمَصِيرُ ﴿٢٨﴾

[29] O Prophet! say to those people: "Whether you conceal that which is in your breasts or whether you disclose it, God knoweth what it is. Not merely this, He knoweth all that there is in the heavens and in the earth, and nothing there

قُلْ إِنْ تُخْفُوا مَا فِي صُدُورِكُمْ أَوْ تُبْدُوهُ يَعْلَمْهُ اللّٰهُ ۗ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ۗ

is which is outside of His sphere of control.

وَاللّٰهُ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ ﴿٢٩﴾

[30] And do not neglect the thought of the coming day. On that day every soul shall find present before it whatever good it had done and also whatever of evil it had wrought. It will then wish that wide were the gulf between itself and the dreadful evil in front. But God would have you beware of Him so that you might abstain from evil; and know that God is very kindly to His servants.

يَوْمَ تَجِدُ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا عَمِلَتْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ مُّحْضَرًا ۚ وَمَا عَمِلَتْ مِنْ سُوْءٍ ۚ تَوَدُّ لَوْ اَنَّ بَيْنَهَا وَبَيْنَهٗٓ اَمَدًاۢ بَعِيْدًا ۗ وَيُحَذِّرُكُمُ اللّٰهُ نَفْسَهٗ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ رَءُوْفٌۢ بِالْعِبَادِ ﴿٣٠﴾

SECTION 4

He who claims to love God should necessarily obey the Prophet; for, the love of God and disregard for him who showeth the way to God cannot co-exist in anyone.. It is the law of God to raise prophets among people to offer the right guidance to them. Those who listen to them and follow their instructions always prosper and those who reject or oppose them deny to themselves the help of God.

Reference is made to the prophets, Yahya (John) and Jesus and also to Mary, mother of Jesus.

[31] O Prophet! say to these people: "If you love God, then follow me. If you do so, God will love you and forgive your sins. He indeed is Forgiving Merciful!"

قُلْ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّوْنَ اللّٰهَ فَاتَّبِعُوْنِيْ يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللّٰهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوْبَكُمْ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿٣١﴾

[32] O Prophet! tell them: "The path of progress and prosperity for you is but one; and it i

قُلْ اَطِيْعُوا اللّٰهَ وَالرَّسُوْلَ ۚ فَاِنْ

that you obey God and the apostle. If, however, they turn back, then God liketh not those who turn away.

تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْكٰفِرِيْنَ ﴿٣٢﴾

[33] Verily God chose Adam and Noah, the family of Abraham and the family of Imran for high distinction.

إِنَّ اللّٰهَ اصْطَفٰٓى اٰدَمَ وَنُوْحًا وَّاٰلَ
إِبْرٰهِيْمَ وَاٰلَ عِمْرٰنَ عَلَى الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿٣٣﴾

[34] The one is the progeny of the other; and God heareth, knoweth.

ذُرِّيَّةً بَعْضُهَا مِنْ بَعْضٍ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ
سَمِيْعٌ عَلِيْمٌ ﴿٣٤﴾

[35] Call to mind the time when the wife of Imran prayed to God: I vow to dedicate to the exclusive service of thy sacred House (Haikal) the child that is in my womb. Accept it for me; for verily thou heareth prayers and knoweth the intentions of those who pray.

إِذْ قَالَتِ امْرَاَتُ عِمْرٰنَ رَبِّ إِنِّيْ
نَذَرْتُ لَكَ مَا فِيْ بَطْنِيْ مُحَرَّرًا فَتَقَبَّلْ
مِنِّيْ ۚ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيْعُ الْعَلِيْمُ ﴿٣٥﴾

[36] When it so happened that instead of a male child, she gave birth to a female child, she raised her voice to God and said: "O Lord! I have brought forth a female child. What am I to do now? (God knew full well what she was to have brought forth) I have vowed my vow in expectation of a male child, and now! a female child has come. A female is not the same as a male that she might function as a dedicated servant of 'Haikal'. Be that as it may, I have named her Mary and I commit her and her offspring to Thee for protection from Satan, the accursed."

فَلَمَّا وَضَعَتْهَا قَالَتْ رَبِّ إِنِّيْ
وَضَعْتُهَآ أُنْثٰى ۗ وَاللّٰهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا
وَضَعَتْ ۗ وَلَيْسَ الذَّكَرُ
كَالْأُنْثٰى ۚ وَإِنِّيْ سَمَّيْتُهَا مَرْيَمَ
وَإِنِّيْٓ أُعِيْذُهَا بِكَ وَذُرِّيَّتَهَا
مِنَ الشَّيْطٰنِ الرَّجِيْمِ ﴿٣٦﴾

Mary was dedicated to the service of Haikal when she was but a child. She was brought up under the care of Zachariah and showed even in her young years marked piety.

[37] So with gracious acceptance did her Lord accept her and with a goodly growth did He make her grow under the goodly care and tutelage of Zachariah. Whenever Zachariah visited her at the sanctuary, he always found her there engaged in prayer with some sort of food kept beside her, whereupon he asked her: "O Mary! whence come these things to thee". She said: "These are from God; for, God giveth sustenance to whomsoever He willeth without measure."

فَتَقَبَّلَهَا رَبُّهَا بِقَبُولٍ حَسَنٍ وَّ
أَنۢبَتَهَا نَبَاتًا حَسَنًا ۙ وَّكَفَّلَهَا
زَكَرِيَّا ۖ كُلَّمَا دَخَلَ عَلَيْهَا زَكَرِيَّا
الْمِحْرَابَ ۙ وَجَدَ عِندَهَا رِزْقًا ۚ
قَالَ يَا مَرْيَمُ أَنَّىٰ لَكِ هَٰذَا ۖ قَالَتْ
هُوَ مِنْ عِندِ اللَّهِ ۖ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَرْزُقُ
مَن يَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ﴿٣٧﴾

Zachariah's prayer and the birth of Yahya as the precursor of Christ:

[38] Forthwith did Zachariah pray to His Lord, saying: "O My Lord! Grant me from thee a goodly offspring who shall be as pious and as devoted to thee as Mary; indeed thou alone hearkenest to prayer."

هُنَالِكَ دَعَا زَكَرِيَّا رَبَّهُ ۖ قَالَ
رَبِّ هَبْ لِي مِن لَّدُنكَ ذُرِّيَّةً
طَيِّبَةً ۖ إِنَّكَ سَمِيعُ الدُّعَاءِ ﴿٣٨﴾

[39] Then did the angels call to him even while he stood praying in the sanctuary, saying, "God announceth thee the advent of John (Yahya) a testifier of the word from God, who will be

فَنَادَتْهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَهُوَ قَائِمٌ
يُصَلِّي فِي الْمِحْرَابِ ۙ أَنَّ اللَّهَ
يُبَشِّرُكَ بِيَحْيَىٰ مُصَدِّقًا بِكَلِمَةٍ

a leader, a man of purity and a prophet raised from among the righteous."

مِّنَ اللّٰهِ وَسَيِّدًا وَّحَصُوْرًا وَّ نَبِيًّا مِّنَ الصّٰلِحِيْنَ ﴿٣٩﴾

[40] When this was announced to him, Zachariah cried out: "O My Lord! How shall I have a son when old age hath already crept over me and my wife is barren." He said: "Even so, God doeth what He pleaseth."

قَالَ رَبِّ اَنّٰى يَكُوْنُ لِىْ غُلٰمٌ وَّقَدْ بَلَغَنِىَ الْكِبَرُ وَامْرَاَتِىْ عَاقِرٌ ؕ قَالَ كَذٰلِكَ اللّٰهُ يَفْعَلُ مَا يَشَآءُ ﴿٤٠﴾

[41] Zachariah said: "O Lord! vouchsafe to me a token". He said: "The token for thee shall be that thou shalt not speak to men for three days save by signs. And remember oft thy Lord, and glorify Him at even and at morn."

قَالَ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ لِّىْٓ اٰيَةً ؕ قَالَ اٰيَتُكَ اَلَّا تُكَلِّمَ النَّاسَ ثَلٰثَةَ اَيَّامٍ اِلَّا رَمْزًا ؕ وَاذْكُرْ رَّبَّكَ كَثِيْرًا وَّسَبِّحْ بِالْعَشِىِّ وَالْاِبْكَارِ ﴿٤١﴾

ع ١٢

Section 5

Mary's reaching the age of maturity and God's conferment on her of high distinctions. Certain details of Mary's life are furnished here which could have come to the knowledge of the Prophet only through revelation.

[42] Thereafter it so happened that the angels said to Mary: "O Mary! God hath selected thee for distinction and sanctified thee and chosen thee above all the women of the world.

وَاِذْ قَالَتِ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ يٰمَرْيَمُ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ اصْطَفٰكِ وَطَهَّرَكِ وَاصْطَفٰكِ عَلٰى نِسَآءِ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿٤٢﴾

[43] "O Mary! Engage thyself in devotion to God and adore Him and bow down with those who bow."

يٰمَرْيَمُ اقْنُتِىْ لِرَبِّكِ وَاسْجُدِىْ وَارْكَعِىْ مَعَ الرّٰكِعِيْنَ ﴿٤٣﴾

[44] O Prophet! This is of the facts not generally known which We reveal to thee, for thou wast not with them when the

ذٰلِكَ مِنْ اَنْۢبَآءِ الْغَيْبِ نُوْحِيْهِ اِلَيْكَ ؕ وَمَا كُنْتَ لَدَيْهِمْ اِذْ

mother of Mary brought her to the sanctuary and when the custodians were casting lots with quills which of them should have charge of Mary, nor was thou with them when they disputed about it.

يُلْقُونَ أَقْلَامَهُمْ أَيُّهُمْ يَكْفُلُ
مَرْيَمَ وَمَا كُنتَ لَدَيْهِمْ إِذْ
يَخْتَصِمُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾

Mary is given the tidings of the coming of Christ.

[45] Thereafter it so happened that the angels came to Mary and said to her: "O Mary! God giveth thee the good tidings of a son by means of a word from Him, whose name shall be Messiah, Jesus, and who shall be known as son of Mary. He will attain an illustrious rank in this world and in the next and be one of those whom God draws to Himself.

إِذْ قَالَتِ الْمَلَائِكَةُ يَا مَرْيَمُ إِنَّ
اللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكِ بِكَلِمَةٍ مِّنْهُ اسْمُهُ
الْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ وَجِيهًا
فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَمِنَ
الْمُقَرَّبِينَ ﴿٤٥﴾

[46] "And he will preach to men from the cradle even as he will preach when grown up and he will be of the righteous."

وَيُكَلِّمُ النَّاسَ فِي الْمَهْدِ وَكَهْلًا
وَمِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾

[47] Mary, greatly amazed at the tidings, exclaimed. "Lord! How shall there be a son to me when no man hath touched me?" He said: "Even so doth God create what He will; when He decreeth a thing, He only sayeth to it? 'Be' and it is.

قَالَتْ رَبِّ أَنَّىٰ يَكُونُ لِي وَلَدٌ
وَلَمْ يَمْسَسْنِي بَشَرٌ قَالَ كَذَٰلِكِ
اللَّهُ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ إِذَا قَضَىٰ
أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُن فَيَكُونُ ﴿٤٧﴾

[48] "And He will instruct him in divine knowledge and the wisdom underlying it, as well

وَيُعَلِّمُهُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَالتَّوْرَاةَ
وَالْإِنجِيلَ ﴿٤٨﴾

as in the Torah and the Evangel

[49] "And he shall be an apostle to the children of Israel. And to them will he say: 'I have come to you with a sign from your Lord: out of clay will I fashion for you a thing in the likeness of a bird and then I will breathe into it, and by God's leave a bird it shall become; and I will heal him that is born blind and heal the leper, and bring the dead to life by God's leave, and I will tell you what you have eaten and what you have stored up in your houses. Undoubtedly in this there shall be a sign for you if ye are men of faith.'

وَرَسُولًا إِلَىٰ بَنِيٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ أَنِّي
قَدْ جِئْتُكُم بِـَٔايَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ ۖ
أَنِّيٓ أَخْلُقُ لَكُم مِّنَ ٱلطِّينِ
كَهَيْـَٔةِ ٱلطَّيْرِ فَأَنفُخُ فِيهِ فَيَكُونُ
طَيْرًۢا بِإِذْنِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَأُبْرِئُ ٱلْأَكْمَهَ
وَٱلْأَبْرَصَ وَأُحْيِ ٱلْمَوْتَىٰ بِإِذْنِ
ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَأُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا تَأْكُلُونَ وَمَا
تَدَّخِرُونَ فِي بُيُوتِكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ
فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَـَٔايَةً لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُم
مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٤٩﴾

Even like the other prophets, Christ did not come to set aside the teachings of the prophets who went before him. He came to confirm them, since the basis of religion was but one and the same in every age and among every people.

[50] "And I have come to confirm the Torah that was delivered before me and make lawful for you certain things which were forbidden you, so that the Law may open out to you the way of easy conformance to it. And I have brought to you a sign from your Lord as prophesied in the previous scriptures. Therefore, be mindful of God and obey me.

وَمُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيَّ مِنَ
ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةِ وَلِأُحِلَّ لَكُم بَعْضَ ٱلَّذِي
حُرِّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ ۚ وَجِئْتُكُم بِـَٔايَةٍ مِّن
رَّبِّكُمْ فَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُونِ ﴿٥٠﴾

[51] 'Undoubtedly, God is my Lord and your Lord, so serve Him. This is the straightpath'."

إِنَّ اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبُّكُمْ فَاعْبُدُوهُ ۗ هَٰذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ ﴿٥١﴾

When Christ came with his mission the scribes, the religious leaders of the Jews, set themselves against him. Only a few from among the poor responded to his call.

[52] And when Jesus felt that the Jews would not accept him, he cried out: "Who is there who would help me in the cause of God?" Thereupon, the disciples answered: "We will be helpers in the cause of God. We have believed in God, and bear thou witness, O Preacher of the Truth, that we are those who are resigned to God."

فَلَمَّا أَحَسَّ عِيسَىٰ مِنْهُمُ الْكُفْرَ قَالَ مَنْ أَنْصَارِي إِلَى اللَّهِ ۖ قَالَ الْحَوَارِيُّونَ نَحْنُ أَنْصَارُ اللَّهِ آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَاشْهَدْ بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾

[53] And they also exclaimed: "Our Lord! We have believed in what Thou hast sent down and we follow Thy apostle. Write us down, therefore, with those who testify to the Truth."

رَبَّنَا آمَنَّا بِمَا أَنْزَلْتَ وَاتَّبَعْنَا الرَّسُولَ فَاكْتُبْنَا مَعَ الشَّاهِدِينَ ﴿٥٣﴾

The Jews intrigued against Jesus. God thwarted their evil schemes against him and gave him protection. The Divine promise to Jesus was that:

(1) God would enable him to fulfil his mission and draw him to Himself,
(2) God would bring to nought the machinations of Christ's detractors; and
(3) God would give his followers ascendency over those who had rejected him.

وَمَكَرُوا وَمَكَرَ اللّٰهُ ۖ وَاللّٰهُ خَيْرُ الْمَاكِرِينَ ﴿٥٤﴾

[54] The Jews who opposed him resorted to many devices in secret to defeat his mission, but God likewise devised, in ways unknown to them, to bring their devices to nought and God is the best of devisers.

SECTION 6

إِذْ قَالَ اللّٰهُ يٰعِيسٰى إِنِّي مُتَوَفِّيكَ وَرَافِعُكَ إِلَيَّ وَمُطَهِّرُكَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَجَاعِلُ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوكَ فَوْقَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِلٰى يَوْمِ الْقِيٰمَةِ ۖ ثُمَّ إِلَيَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ فِيمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾

[55] (It was at such a juncture in the history of Christ's mission that God said by way of heartening him and his followers:) "O Jesus! Verily, I will complete thy course of time and will raise thee up to Myself and will absolve you of all the accusations levelled at you by your detractors and will give thy followers for all times ascendency over those who have rejected thee. And eventually all have to return to Me and I will decide on the day of resurrection on matters wherein people have entertained differences;

فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَأُعَذِّبُهُمْ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ ۫ وَمَا لَهُمْ مِنْ نٰصِرِينَ ﴿٥٦﴾

[56] "And I will chastise those who have rejected thee with a severe chastisement both in this world and in the next, and there shall be none to help them;

وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ فَيُوَفِّيهِمْ أُجُورَهُمْ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الظّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٥٧﴾

[57] "And I shall reward in full measure those who have believed and worked righteously, and know that God doth not like the unjust."

ذٰلِكَ نَتْلُوهُ عَلَيْكَ مِنَ الْآيٰتِ وَالذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيمِ ﴿٥٨﴾

[58] O Prophet! This which we rehearse to thee is a revelation and a significant admonition.

The *Qur'ān* here denies divinity to Christ. It states that he was but a human being, and that he had been chosen to be a Prophet of God.

The *Qur'ān* asserts that despite the widespread belief entertained by Christians in the divinity of Christ, the Qur'ānic assertion will in the end prevail throughout the world, since the belief in the divinity of a human being is repugnant to the very concept of Divine Unity.

[59] Verily the creation of Jesus is for God just the same as that of Adam. He created him (Adam) of dust. He then said to him, "Be" and even, as God wished, he was.

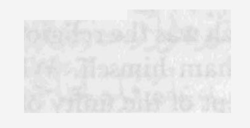
إِنَّ مَثَلَ عِيسَىٰ عِندَ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ
آدَمَ ۖ خَلَقَهُ مِن تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ
قَالَ لَهُ كُن فَيَكُونُ ﴿٥٩﴾

[60] O Prophet! Whatever has been said here touching Jesus is the truth from Thy Lord, and what issueth forth from God is definite and unalterable. Be not therefore of those who entertain doubt.

الْحَقُّ مِن رَّبِّكَ فَلَا تَكُن مِّنَ
الْمُمْتَرِينَ ﴿٦٠﴾

[61] Should any one dispute with thee in this, even after this assertion of the *Qur'ān* and the knowledge that hath come to thee, then, say to them: "For my part I am convinced of the truth that Jesus was but a human being; if you people however feel convinced of his divinity, then, let you and I agree to come out into the open and bring with us severally our sons and our womenfolk, and this done let us together

فَمَنْ حَاجَّكَ فِيهِ مِن بَعْدِ مَا
جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ فَقُلْ تَعَالَوْا
نَدْعُ أَبْنَاءَنَا وَأَبْنَاءَكُمْ وَ
نِسَاءَنَا وَنِسَاءَكُمْ وَأَنفُسَنَا وَ
أَنفُسَكُمْ ثُمَّ نَبْتَهِلْ فَنَجْعَل



pray and invoke the malison of God on those who question the truth."

لَّعْنَتَ اللّٰهِ عَلَى الْكٰذِبِيْنَ ﴿٦١﴾

[62] O Prophet! what has been stated here is verily the truth. There is none worthy of worship except God. And God! He alone is Mighty, Wise!

إِنَّ هٰذَا لَهُوَ الْقَصَصُ الْحَقُّ ۚ وَمَا مِنْ إِلٰهٍ إِلَّا اللّٰهُ ۚ وَإِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيْزُ الْحَكِيْمُ ﴿٦٢﴾

[63] But if even then they turn away (as did the Christians of Najran when invited to this test), God knoweth well those bent on mischief.

فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلِيْمٌ بِالْمُفْسِدِيْنَ ﴿٦٣﴾ ع

SECTION 7

Another opportunity is given to the people of the Book, the Jews and the Christians to compose differences and to come to an agreement with the Prophet. If their opposition to the teachings of the *Qur'ān* was not prompted by any prejudice or ill-will, and if they still retained any love for truth, they were asked to put by all matters of controversy and to agree to affirm at least those basic truths which they themselves recognized but which they had neglected in practice. These are:

(1) None is worthy of worship except God.
(2) None shall be associated with God in all that is attributed to Him.
(3) No human being shall regard another human being so holy and sinless as to be looked upon as God himself.

Such was the religious outlook of the Prophet, the outlook of Abraham himself. Whatever was a deviation from this pure concept of the unity of God in the Jewish and Christian theo-

logy was a later development. So, whenever the Jews and the Christians contend severally that the way of thought and living which they followed was but the way of Abraham, they do so in sheer ignorance. The religion of Abraham was split up into sectarian creeds hundreds of years after him and this was done in the name of Moses and Jesus.

[64] O Prophet! say to the Jews and the Christians: "O people of the Book! Let us not wrangle over what may be regarded as controversial subjects. Let us at least agree on that which is recognised alike by you and by us, i.e. that we worship none but God and associate nothing with Him, and take not each other as Lord to the exclusion of God." If even then they turn away, say: "Bear ye witness that the refusal comes from your side and that we are those who are resigned to God alone.

قُلْ يَٰٓأَهْلَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ تَعَالَوْا إِلَىٰ كَلِمَةٍ سَوَآءٍ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا ٱللَّهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِۦ شَيْـًٔا وَلَا يَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا أَرْبَابًا مِّن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا فَقُولُوا ٱشْهَدُوا بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿٦٤﴾

[65] "O people of the Book! wherefore do ye dispute about Abraham, whether his religion was Judaism or Christianity, when you know that the *Torah* and the *Evangel* on which you base your different sectarian creeds, were not sent down till after he had passed away? Can you not understand this much?

يَٰٓأَهْلَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ لِمَ تُحَآجُّونَ فِىٓ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَمَآ أُنزِلَتِ ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةُ وَٱلْإِنجِيلُ إِلَّا مِنۢ بَعْدِهِۦٓ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾

[66] "Behold! Ye are they who dispute in respect of what was known to you already in some

هَٰٓأَنتُمْ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ حَٰجَجْتُمْ فِيمَا لَكُم بِهِۦ عِلْمٌ فَلِمَ تُحَآجُّونَ فِيمَا

form or other, as is clear from the way in which you refer, however wrongly, to what is lawful and what is not. Why then do you dispute in respect of what you know not? It is God who knoweth and ye are those who know not.

لَيْسَ لَكُمْ بِهِ عِلْمٌ ۚ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٦٦﴾

[67] "Abraham was neither a Jew nor a Christian nor a follower of any sectarian creed. On the other hand, he was one staunch in faith, resigned to God, and one who would not let anything affect the singleness of his devotion to God."

مَا كَانَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ يَهُودِيًّا وَلَا نَصْرَانِيًّا وَلَٰكِنْ كَانَ حَنِيفًا مُسْلِمًا وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٦٧﴾

[68] Of men who should claim the closest relation to Abraham are those who followed him in his time, as well as this Prophet, and those who believe in him, and not those, who have split up his faith into Judaism and Christianity and denied in practice the unity of God. And remember that God is the protector of the faithful.

إِنَّ أَوْلَى النَّاسِ بِإِبْرَاهِيمَ لَلَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُ وَهَٰذَا النَّبِيُّ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ۗ وَاللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٦٨﴾

[69] O Muslims! there is a section among the people of the Book who would fain turn you away from the path of Truth so that you should waver in your pursuit of the religion of Abraham. But remember that however much they may scheme to mislead you, they will not succeed. On the other hand, themselves

وَدَّتْ طَائِفَةٌ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ لَوْ يُضِلُّونَكُمْ وَمَا يُضِلُّونَ إِلَّا

do they mislead, although in their ignorance and wilfulness they do not realise it

أَنفُسَهُمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾

[70] O people of the Book! Why deny the signs of God when you yourselves see them before you?

يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَأَنتُمْ تَشْهَدُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾

Section 8

The basic defect in the position of the people of the Book was that they regarded the privilege of knowing the truth of religion to be exclusive to their own people or their group. Their contention was that none who did not belong to them could be a repository of truth, or of anything higher than what they possessed, and that all that was to have been given to man had been given to them, and that thereafter the treasure-house of divine graciousness had been sealed forever.

[71] O People of the Book! Why do ye clothe what is true with what is false and knowingly suppress the truth?

يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تَلْبِسُونَ الْحَقَّ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتَكْتُمُونَ الْحَقَّ وَأَنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٧١﴾

[72] There is a section among the people of the Book who say to their compeers just to mislead the Muslims: "Believe at day-break in what has been sent down to the Muslims and deny it at the close of the day that perchance they may also retract by following your example."

وَقَالَت طَّائِفَةٌ مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ آمِنُوا بِالَّذِي أُنزِلَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَجْهَ النَّهَارِ وَاكْفُرُوا آخِرَهُ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾

[73] And they say among themselves: 'trust none except him who follows your way'. To these people, O

وَلَا تُؤْمِنُوا إِلَّا لِمَن تَبِعَ دِينَكُمْ

Prophet, say: "Verily, the true way is the way of God, and that is not the exclusive heritage of any particular group or race; and that he who follows it will be the rightly guided." They further say among themselves: "Do not admit that the like of what hath been imparted to you may also be imparted to others, nor do you admit that any plea advanced by others will prevail against you before your Lord."

Say O Prophet to these people: "The bestowal of favours is in the gift of God. He bestoweth them in abundance on whomsoever He pleaseth; and God is liberal and distinguishes the deserving from the undeserving.

قُلْ إِنَّ الْهُدَىٰ هُدَى اللَّهِ أَن يُؤْتَىٰ أَحَدٌ مِّثْلَ مَا أُوتِيتُمْ أَوْ يُحَاجُّوكُمْ عِندَ رَبِّكُمْ ۗ قُلْ إِنَّ الْفَضْلَ بِيَدِ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَن يَشَاءُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٧٣﴾

[74] "He singleth out for His grace whomsoever He liketh, and God is undoubtedly great in His liberality."

يَخْتَصُّ بِرَحْمَتِهِ مَن يَشَاءُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٧٤﴾

The people of the Book said that whatever had been enjoined on them in regard to the observance of honesty in business transactions should be observed only in relation to the people of their own faith, and that it was not necessary to observe them in relation to others. They regarded it lawful to defraud others in every way. But the *Qur'ān* states that dishonesty in any form is after all dishonesty and misappropriation in any form is after all misappropriation. The difference in religion does not alter the nature of good and evil. He who commits an act of dishonesty, whatever his religion or sect, he has indeed committed a great sin and he will, on the day of judgement, be denied forgiveness.

[75] Among the people of the Book are some, every one of whom will restore even a large treasure to thee shouldst thou entrust it to him; and among them also there are some, none of whom will restore to thee even a dinar, shouldst thou entrust it to him, unless thou art pressing in thy demand on him. This *is* because they say: "We owe no responsibility to keep faith with the pagans," and thus they foist a lie on God and they do it knowingly.

وَمِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتٰبِ مَنْ إِنْ تَأْمَنْهُ
بِقِنْطَارٍ يُؤَدِّهٖٓ إِلَيْكَ ۚ وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ
إِنْ تَأْمَنْهُ بِدِيْنَارٍ لَّا يُؤَدِّهٖٓ إِلَيْكَ
إِلَّا مَا دُمْتَ عَلَيْهِ قَآئِمًا ۗ ذٰلِكَ
بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوْا لَيْسَ عَلَيْنَا فِي
الْأُمِّيّٖنَ سَبِيْلٌ ۚ وَيَقُوْلُوْنَ
عَلَى اللّٰهِ الْكَذِبَ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٧٥﴾

[76] Every one is responsible for what he does, be it good or evil. That is the law of God. Whoso fulfilleth his engagement, being mindful of God, let him know that God indeed loveth those who are mindful of Him, whatever their religion or group affiliation.

بَلٰى مَنْ أَوْفٰى بِعَهْدِهٖ وَاتَّقٰى
فَإِنَّ اللّٰهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَّقِيْنَ ﴿٧٦﴾

[77] Verily, for them who barter for a paltry worldly gain the promises they have made to God to be upright and honest, and their own oaths never to misappropriate another's property, for them there shall be no portion in the Hereafter; God will not speak to them on the Day of Resurrection, nor even look at them, much less absolve them of their

إِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ يَشْتَرُوْنَ بِعَهْدِ
اللّٰهِ وَأَيْمَانِهِمْ ثَمَنًا قَلِيْلًا
أُولٰٓئِكَ لَا خَلَاقَ لَهُمْ فِي
الْاٰخِرَةِ وَلَا يُكَلِّمُهُمُ اللّٰهُ
وَلَا يَنْظُرُ إِلَيْهِمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ

sins; and for them is a painful chastisement.

وَلَا يُزَكِّيهِمْ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٧٧﴾

The learned among the people of the Book had divested it of all religious knowledge of the spirit underlying it. They no doubt recited its verses and commented thereon, but in self-interest they very often misinterpreted its contents. The masses took their word for the word of God. On the other hand, what they used to say was nothing but their own invention.

The learned among the people of the Book regarded the masses as their tools or slaves with the result that the latter looked up to them for guidance even in religious matters and imagined that it was they who possessed the key to heaven and hell, although it was not proper for any human being to obey the word of man as against the word of God.

[78] And among them, there are certainly some who alter the phraseology of their Scripture (while reciting it) in order that you may take it to be a passage from the Scripture, whereas it is not from it; and they say, 'This is from God', whereas it is not from Him. They foist a lie on God, and this they do knowingly.

وَإِنَّ مِنْهُمْ لَفَرِيقًا يَلْوُونَ أَلْسِنَتَهُمْ بِالْكِتَابِ لِتَحْسَبُوهُ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَمَا هُوَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَيَقُولُونَ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ وَمَا هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ وَيَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾

[79] It beseemeth not man that God should give him the Book and authority and prophethood, and that thereafter he should say to men: "Be worshippers of me instead of God". He should rather say: "Be men of God, since you have been teaching the scriptures and studying it".

مَا كَانَ لِبَشَرٍ أَنْ يُؤْتِيَهُ اللَّهُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحُكْمَ وَالنُّبُوَّةَ ثُمَّ يَقُولَ لِلنَّاسِ كُونُوا عِبَادًا لِي مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلَٰكِنْ كُونُوا رَبَّانِيِّينَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تُعَلِّمُونَ الْكِتَابَ وَبِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَدْرُسُونَ ﴿٧٩﴾

[80] Nor will he bid you take the angels and the prophets for your Lords. What! will he bid you take to unbelief after you have resigned yourselves to God?

وَلَا يَأْمُرَكُمْ أَنْ تَتَّخِذُوا الْمَلٰٓئِكَةَ وَالنَّبِيّٖنَ أَرْبَابًا ۗ أَيَأْمُرُكُمْ بِالْكُفْرِ بَعْدَ إِذْ أَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ ۝٨٠

SECTION 9

The *Qur'ān* here draws attention to a fundamental doctrine of Islam that all the prophets sponsored but one way of life. That is why every succeeding prophet had to affirm that he was merely confirming what had been done by his predecessors. So, when the way of God is but one and the different prophets have together formed but one chain or one line, to differentiate one from the other or to accept one and reject another is to deny the entire line of prophets or those who came to offer the right guidance to humanity.

[81] Call to mind what God said when He entered into a covenant with you (the Israelites) regarding the prophets. (He had said): "This is the Book and the wisdom which I give you. Hereafter, should a prophet come to you confirming that which is already with you, ye shall surely believe on him and ye shall surely aid him. Are you resolved and do you accept the covenant on these terms"? They said: "We are resolved". Said he: "Be then witnesses and I will be a witness along with you".

وَإِذْ أَخَذَ اللّٰهُ مِيثَاقَ النَّبِيّٖنَ لَمَآ أٰتَيْتُكُمْ مِنْ كِتٰبٍ وَحِكْمَةٍ ثُمَّ جَآءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مُصَدِّقٌ لِمَا مَعَكُمْ لَتُؤْمِنُنَّ بِهٖ وَلَتَنْصُرُنَّهٗ ۗ قَالَ ءَأَقْرَرْتُمْ وَأَخَذْتُمْ عَلٰى ذٰلِكُمْ إِصْرِي ۖ قَالُوٓا أَقْرَرْنَا ۚ قَالَ فَاشْهَدُوا وَأَنَا مَعَكُمْ مِنَ الشّٰهِدِينَ ۝٨١

[82] Then, those who turn away after this shall surely be regarded as disobedient.

فَمَنْ تَوَلّٰى بَعْدَ ذٰلِكَ فَأُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْفٰسِقُونَ ۝٨٢

The way of God or religion is nothing but conformity to the laws of life at work in nature. All that there is in the earth and the heavens, every thing created, scrupulously obeys these laws of God. Is there any other law which governs the universe except this divine law of nature? What objection have you, asks the *Qur'ān*, to follow the law on which alone depends the working of this vast system of the universe. It is this law of life which offers universal guidance to mankind. It is a matter of regret that men have constituted themselves into groups, one contending against another and every one following its own way. The *Qur'ān* states that it has come to rid humanity of this waywardness and turn them to the common path of truth which all leaders of men, the prophets, have uniformly endorsed and enjoined upon man to follow.

[83] Do they desire to follow ways other than the way of God, when all that is in the heavens or the earth doth submit to Him willingly or unwillingly and hath to return to Him?

أَفَغَيْرَ دِيْنِ اللّٰهِ يَبْغُوْنَ وَلَهٗٓ اَسْلَمَ
مَنْ فِى السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ طَوْعًا
وَّكَرْهًا وَّاِلَيْهِ يُرْجَعُوْنَ ﴿٨٣﴾

[84] Say: "We believe in God and in that which has been sent down to us and that which was sent down to Abraham, and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and his descendents, and in that which was given to Moses and Jesus and the prophets from their Lord: no distinction do we make between any of them and to Him are we resigned."

قُلْ اٰمَنَّا بِاللّٰهِ وَمَآ اُنْزِلَ
عَلَيْنَا وَمَآ اُنْزِلَ عَلٰٓى اِبْرٰهِيْمَ
وَاِسْمٰعِيْلَ وَاِسْحٰقَ وَيَعْقُوْبَ
وَالْاَسْبَاطِ وَمَآ اُوْتِيَ مُوْسٰى وَ
عِيْسٰى وَالنَّبِيُّوْنَ مِنْ رَّبِّهِمْ
لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ اَحَدٍ مِّنْهُمْ
وَنَحْنُ لَهٗ مُسْلِمُوْنَ ﴿٨٤﴾

[85] No way of life, sought after by any one, other than the way of acknowledging all prophets who have sponsored the way of truth, shall be acceptable and he who

وَمَنْ يَّبْتَغِ غَيْرَ الْاِسْلَامِ دِيْنًا
فَلَنْ يُّقْبَلَ مِنْهُ ۚ وَهُوَ فِى

follows any other way shall in the next world be among the lost.

الْاٰخِرَةِ مِنَ الْخٰسِرِيْنَ ﴿٨٥﴾

They who having accepted the Faith turned away from it and would not entertain any argument or sign of God and who even now persist in their opposition to the call of Truth, have no hope for reform. They have chosen for themselves the path of degradation in this world and of eternal chastisement in the next.

The law of returns is always at work in life. Evil will lead to evil results and goodness to good results. In this world, one may escape punishment by offering monetary compensation for evil done; but in the court of God, no such compensation is acceptable. The only way out is the way of repentance which liquidates all sin, provided it is sincere. Of course, the offering of wealth for the good of others stands on a different footing. It is itself a good act and no one can succeed in the path of goodness unless he sacrifices in the name of God that which he holds dear or regards precious to him. This also will count in the final evaluation of one's life on the Day of Judgment.

[86] How shall God open out the path of success for a people who, after they had accepted the Faith and affirmed that the apostle was a true apostle, and after clear signs had reached them, retracted? God guideth not the people who are faithless.

كَيْفَ يَهْدِي اللّٰهُ قَوْمًا كَفَرُوْا بَعْدَ اِيْمَانِهِمْ وَشَهِدُوْٓا اَنَّ الرَّسُوْلَ حَقٌّ وَّجَآءَهُمُ الْبَيِّنٰتُ وَاللّٰهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿٨٦﴾

[87] On such as these shall rest the malison of God, of angels, and of all men,

اُولٰٓئِكَ جَزَآؤُهُمْ اَنَّ عَلَيْهِمْ لَعْنَةَ اللّٰهِ وَالْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ وَالنَّاسِ اَجْمَعِيْنَ ﴿٨٧﴾

[88] Under which shall they remain; their torment shall not be lightened, nor shall they have any respite,

خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهَا لَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمُ الْعَذَابُ وَلَا هُمْ يُنْظَرُوْنَ ﴿٨٨﴾

[89] Save such as shall repent thereafter and amend; for, God indeed is Forgiving, Merciful!

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَٰلِكَ وَأَصْلَحُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٨٩﴾

[90] As for those who have retracted after accepting the faith and have grown hardened in unbelief, mere (verbal) repentance from them shall never be accepted.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بَعْدَ إِيمَانِهِمْ ثُمَّ ازْدَادُوا كُفْرًا لَنْ تُقْبَلَ تَوْبَتُهُمْ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الضَّالُّونَ ﴿٩٠﴾

[91] As for those who have refused to believe and died in unbelief, from not one of them shall be accepted even the entire gold that the earth containeth if he were to offer it in redemption. These are they for whom shall be a painful chastisement, and for whom there shall be no helpers.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَمَاتُوا وَهُمْ كُفَّارٌ فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْ أَحَدِهِمْ مِلْءُ الْأَرْضِ ذَهَبًا وَلَوِ افْتَدَىٰ بِهِ أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ وَمَا لَهُمْ مِنْ نَاصِرِينَ ﴿٩١﴾

Part IV

Chapter III

ĀL-I-IMRĀN (*Contd.*)



CHAPTER III

ĀL-I-IMRĀN (*Contd.*)

SECTION 10

[92] You shall never attain to goodness till you give to others out of what you cherish. And whatsoever you give away, God surely will know it.

لَنْ تَنَالُوا الْبِرَّ حَتّٰى تُنْفِقُوْا مِمَّا تُحِبُّوْنَ ۬ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوْا مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ بِهٖ عَلِيْمٌ ﴿٩٢﴾

The Jews levelled two objections against the Prophet's mission:

(1) They said that if the *Qur'ān* really confirmed the previous scriptures, how was it that it did not prohibit all that was prohibited among the Jews.

(2) If the religion of the *Qur'ān* was not different from the religion of Abraham and his descendants, why was it that Ka'Ba in Mecca was chosen as the Qibla in place of Jerusalem which was the Qibla of all the prophets of the Israelites.

In respect of the first objection, the *Qur'ān* says that before the advent of the *Torah*, all wholesome food was lawful to the children of Israel; so much so that all prophets from Abraham downward to Moses considered them lawful. And then, the *Torah* came to stop the use of certain foods, not because they were in any way unclean but because it was found necessary to check the inordinate use the Israelites made of them. As for the rest which the Jews considered as unlawful, it was not the law of God which prohibited their use but the people themselves had developed a dislike for them. This the *Torah* itself makes clear in certain passages.

As for the objection touching the appointment of Ka'ba as Qibla, the Jews should know that it was Abraham who constructed the house of prayer in Mecca. He did not set up any house of prayer at Jerusalem.

[93] All forms of food usually agreeable to man were made lawful to the children of Israel ere the *Torah* was sent down, except what at a certain stage Jacab (or Israel) denied to himself of his own accord. If the Jews dispute this with you, ask them to bring the *Torah* and to read out the relevant passages from it if they speak the truth.

كُلُّ الطَّعَامِ كَانَ حِلًّا لِّبَنِيٓ إِسْرَآءِيلَ إِلَّا مَا حَرَّمَ إِسْرَآءِيلُ عَلَىٰ نَفْسِهِۦ مِن قَبْلِ أَن تُنَزَّلَ التَّوْرَىٰةُ ۗ قُلْ فَأْتُوا بِالتَّوْرَىٰةِ فَاتْلُوهَآ إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰدِقِينَ ﴿٩٣﴾

[94] Even after this, the Jews do not desist from their false assertions and invent a lie on God, then, they deserve to be branded as mischief-makers.

فَمَنِ افْتَرَىٰ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ ذَٰلِكَ فَأُولَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الظَّٰلِمُونَ ﴿٩٤﴾

[95] Say: God has revealed the truth. Follow therefore the faith of Abraham, the staunch in faith, and one who would not let anything affect his single-minded devotion to God.

قُلْ صَدَقَ اللَّهُ ۗ فَاتَّبِعُوا مِلَّةَ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ حَنِيفًا ۖ وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٩٥﴾

[96] The first house of prayer that was ever appointed for men was the one at Becca, the blessed and a source of inspiration for all mankind.

إِنَّ أَوَّلَ بَيْتٍ وُضِعَ لِلنَّاسِ لَلَّذِي بِبَكَّةَ مُبَارَكًا وَهُدًى لِّلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٩٦﴾

[97] Therein are sign-posts including the station of Abraham and he who enters it has entered the abode of peace. And pilgrimage to this House is a homage due to God from those who are able to journey thither. And if any one should decline

فِيهِ ءَايَٰتٌۢ بَيِّنَٰتٌ مَّقَامُ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ ۖ وَمَن دَخَلَهُۥ كَانَ ءَامِنًا ۗ وَلِلَّهِ عَلَى النَّاسِ حِجُّ الْبَيْتِ مَنِ

to offer it, then, (be it noted that) God is above the homage of every human being.

[98] Say: "O People of the Book! Why do you deny the signs of God? God is witnessing all that you do."

[99] Say: "O People of the Book! Why do you hinder the believers from taking to the way of God by frightening them of fancied obstacles lying ahead, while you are perfectly aware (that the way is clear)? And God is not regardless of what you do."

اسْتَطَاعَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا ۚ وَمَن
كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ عَنِ
الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٩٧﴾
قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ
اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ شَهِيدٌ عَلَىٰ مَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٨﴾
قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تَصُدُّونَ
عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ مَنْ آمَنَ
تَبْغُونَهَا عِوَجًا وَأَنتُمْ شُهَدَاءُ ۗ
وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٩﴾

From the people of the Book, the *Qur'ān* now turns to the followers of the faith or of Islam and draws their attention to certain important issues of the faith:

(1) The *Qur'ān* points out that the iniquities of the Jews and the Christians referred to in the previous passages should open their eyes and offer a lesson for them. Should the Muslims follow their ways or let their minds be influenced by them, they will assuredly return to their former evil life.

(2) You cannot derive true benefits from your profession of faith unless you cling to God tenaciously and express your faith in Him in appropriate action.

(3) Protect yourselves from internal dissensions and group rivalry and be steadfast in your faith in God. Do not forget that you were a divided people and that God in His graciousness has now welded you into one people. So do not disturb this unity.

(4) Remember that a band of people should rise from among you to lead mankind to the path of goodness and enjoin the right and forbid the wrong and keep the people close to the path of righteousness.

(5) Rifts in the body of religion are as fatal as rifts in the body politic. The greatest weakness of the people of the Book was that they disturbed the very basis of their religion and divided themselves into groups. Let the Muslims beware of such a development among themselves.

[100] O Ye who believe! were ye to obey some of those who have been given the Book, they will turn you into unbelievers after you have believed.

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْٓا اِنْ تُطِيْعُوْا فَرِيْقًا مِّنَ الَّذِيْنَ اُوْتُوا الْكِتٰبَ يَرُدُّوْكُمْ بَعْدَ اِيْمَانِكُمْ كٰفِرِيْنَ ۝١٠٠

[101] And how can you retract your faith when the messages of God are recited to you and His apostle is still in your midst? And whosoever clingeth to God, he indeed has entered on the straight path.

وَكَيْفَ تَكْفُرُوْنَ وَاَنْتُمْ تُتْلٰى عَلَيْكُمْ اٰيٰتُ اللّٰهِ وَفِيْكُمْ رَسُوْلُهٗ ۭ وَمَنْ يَّعْتَصِمْ بِاللّٰهِ فَقَدْ هُدِيَ اِلٰى صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيْمٍ ۝١٠١ ع

Section 11

[102] O Ye who believe! Be regardful of God as He deserveth to be regarded and die not except in a state of resignation to God.

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ حَقَّ تُقٰتِهٖ وَلَا تَمُوْتُنَّ اِلَّا وَاَنْتُمْ مُّسْلِمُوْنَ ۝١٠٢

[103] And hold fast to the cable of God, all ye together, and be not divided, and remember God's goodness towards you, that when ye were enemies, one of another, He united your hearts in affection, and by His favour ye became brethren; and when ye were on the brink of a pit of fire, He drew ye back from it. In this way, doth God make clear to you His signs, in order that you may take to the right path.

وَاعْتَصِمُوْا بِحَبْلِ اللّٰهِ جَمِيْعًا وَّلَا تَفَرَّقُوْا ۠ وَاذْكُرُوْا نِعْمَتَ اللّٰهِ عَلَيْكُمْ اِذْ كُنْتُمْ اَعْدَاۗءً فَاَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوْبِكُمْ فَاَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهٖٓ اِخْوَانًا ۚ وَكُنْتُمْ عَلٰي شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِّنَ النَّارِ فَاَنْقَذَكُمْ مِّنْهَا ۭ كَذٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللّٰهُ لَكُمْ اٰيٰتِهٖ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُوْنَ ۝١٠٣

[104] Let there be a band of people among you who shall call men to goodness, and enjoin the right and forbid the wrong. And these are they who will be a force for progress.

وَلْتَكُن مِّنكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ
إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ
وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنكَرِ ۚ وَأُولَٰئِكَ
هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٠٤﴾

[105] And be ye not like those who fell into factions, and differed among themselves after clear signs had come to them. And for these awaiteth a severe chastisement.

وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ تَفَرَّقُوا وَاخْتَلَفُوا
مِن بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْبَيِّنَاتُ ۚ
وَأُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٠٥﴾

[106] On the day of resurrection, the faces of those who have lived righteously shall turn bright, and the faces of those who lived unrighteously will, in dread of the awaiting doom, turn black. And they whose faces will have turned black will be questioned, "What! Did you retract what you had believed in? Taste chasttisement for having retracted."

يَوْمَ تَبْيَضُّ وُجُوهٌ وَتَسْوَدُّ وُجُوهٌ ۚ
فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ اسْوَدَّتْ وُجُوهُهُمْ
أَكَفَرْتُم بَعْدَ إِيمَانِكُمْ فَذُوقُوا
الْعَذَابَ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَكْفُرُونَ ﴿١٠٦﴾

[107] As for those whose faces shall have turned bright, they will live reposed in Divine graciousness: therein they shall abide.

وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ ابْيَضَّتْ وُجُوهُهُمْ فَفِي
رَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ ۖ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ﴿١٠٧﴾

[108] These are the revelations of God! We recite them to thee in right form. And God doth not deal unfairly with His creatures.

تِلْكَ آيَاتُ اللَّهِ نَتْلُوهَا عَلَيْكَ بِالْحَقِّ ۗ
وَمَا اللَّهُ يُرِيدُ ظُلْمًا لِّلْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٠٨﴾

[109] Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth is God's! And to God shall all affairs be referred back.

وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ۚ

SECTION 12

The *Qur'ān* now addresses the immediate followers of the Prophet. It styles them *Umatan Wasata* or a middle or model community, and points out that they have been raised up to enjoin the right and forbid the wrong.

The ideal placed before them was not that of a community

who should aspire to be militarily the strongest so as to assume the dominant position of dictatorship. The *Qur'ān* condemns arbitrary power and regards the urge for aggrandisement as repugnant to the best interests of humanity and to the establishment of peace and equality among men. Its emphasis is on collective goodness achieved through an inward regard for morality and purity of thought and living on the part of individuals. A community inspired by such an ideal will necessarily attain pre-eminence in life and will never fall a prey to the temptation of power, pride, and racial aggressiveness.

The *Qur'ān* points out that the Jews and the Christians would have played this role of a model society if a majority of them had not given up the spirit of faith and goodness in their day-to-day activities. The greatest opposition to the call of Truth had come from the Jews who, because of their iniquities, had earned the displeasure of God and were reduced at the time to a state of abasement in every part of the world. They were neither in a position to live on their own as in Arabia, nor were they politically a privileged people anywhere as in the Persian and the Roman Empires. The *Qur'ān* therefore asks the Muslims of the time not to worry seriously over the opposition from the Jews. They were assured that the time was not far off when even the little influence they seemed to enjoy in Arabia would disappear.

The truth is brought home here that the *Qur'ān* looks down upon political dependence of one community upon another. The Jews were living at the time as a subject race in the Roman Empire. Even in Arabia where they lived in colonies of their own, they had ceased to be a political entity.

[110] Ye (the immediate followers of the Prophet) are a band of good people raised up to be a model for mankind. Ye enjoin the right and forbid the wrong, and ye repose faith in God. And if the people of the Book had

كُنتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَلَوْ

believed, it would surely have been better for them. And of them, some there are who no doubt are believers, but most of them are perverse.

اٰمَنَ اَهْلُ الْكِتٰبِ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ ۭ مِنْهُمُ الْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ وَاَكْثَرُھُمُ الْفٰسِقُوْنَ ﴿١١٠﴾

[111] They cannot inflict on you anything save a trifling harm; and if they ever do battle with you, they will do only to turn their backs on you. They shall then receive no help from anywhere.

لَنْ يَّضُرُّوْكُمْ اِلَّآ اَذًى ۭ وَاِنْ يُّقَاتِلُوْكُمْ يُوَلُّوْكُمُ الْاَدْبَارَ ۣ ثُمَّ لَا يُنْصَرُوْنَ ﴿١١١﴾

[112] They shall be covered with infamy wherever they are, except where they are promised protection, even which position is one of abasement. They have increased the displeasure of God and are covered with disgrace, and this is because they had not believed in the commandments of God and had slain the prophets for no reason, and this because they had rebelled and become transgressors.

ضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الذِّلَّةُ اَيْنَ مَا ثُقِفُوْٓا اِلَّا بِحَبْلٍ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ وَحَبْلٍ مِّنَ النَّاسِ وَبَاۗءُوْ بِغَضَبٍ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ وَضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَسْكَنَةُ ۭ ذٰلِكَ بِاَنَّھُمْ كَانُوْا يَكْفُرُوْنَ بِاٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ وَيَقْتُلُوْنَ الْاَنْۢبِيَاۗءَ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ ۭ ذٰلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوْا وَّكَانُوْا يَعْتَدُوْنَ ﴿١١٢﴾

By dwelling on the iniquities of the Jews and the Christians repeatedly, the *Qur'ān* does not mean to suggest that there were none among them who were upright. There were certainly some among them who were upright, and also enjoined the right and forbade the wrong and were seriously engaged in devotion to God. The number of such people was, however, limited; a large majority of them had lost the spirit of faith and action. The reputation of a nation always goes by the behaviour of the majority of people among them. Of course, those among the people of the Book who possessed the strength of faith would assuredly obtain the reward of their good deeds. The Divine law of returns does not operate only in favour of particular communities. Its universal operation yields a good return to every one who qualifies himself for it by his upright character.

[113] Yet are they not all alike. Among the people of the Book, there are upright persons who recite the word of God during night hours and bend in adoration.

لَيْسُوا سَوَاءً ۗ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتٰبِ
أُمَّةٌ قَائِمَةٌ يَتْلُونَ اٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ
اٰنَاءَ الَّيْلِ وَهُمْ يَسْجُدُونَ ﴿١١٣﴾

[114] They believe in God and the last Day and enjoin the right and forbid the wrong, and are eager to do good. These are of the righteous.

يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللّٰهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْاٰخِرِ وَ
يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ
عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُسَارِعُونَ فِي الْخَيْرٰتِ
وَأُولٰٓئِكَ مِنَ الصّٰلِحِينَ ﴿١١٤﴾

[115] And whatever good they do shall by no means go unacknowledged; and God knoweth those who are righteous.

وَمَا يَفْعَلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَلَنْ يُّكْفَرُوهُ ۗ
وَاللّٰهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١١٥﴾

[116] As for those who have not believed, neither their possessions, nor their children shall avail them against God. These are the companions of Fire to abide therein.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَنْ تُغْنِيَ عَنْهُمْ
أَمْوَالُهُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُهُمْ مِنَ اللّٰهِ شَيْئًا ۖ
وَأُولٰٓئِكَ أَصْحٰبُ النَّارِ ۚ هُمْ فِيهَا خٰلِدُونَ ﴿١١٦﴾

[117] Whatever such people may spend in the life of this world is like that freezing wind which bloweth upon and destroyeth the corn fields. They are a people who have been hurtful to themselves. God hath not done any injustice to them; on the other hand, they have been unjust to themselves.

مَثَلُ مَا يُنْفِقُونَ فِي هٰذِهِ الْحَيٰوةِ
الدُّنْيَا كَمَثَلِ رِيحٍ فِيهَا صِرٌّ
أَصَابَتْ حَرْثَ قَوْمٍ ظَلَمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ
فَأَهْلَكَتْهُ ۗ وَمَا ظَلَمَهُمُ اللّٰهُ
وَلٰكِنْ أَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ ﴿١١٧﴾

Since the people of the Book, even as the Quraish, the polytheists of Mecca, are now determined to oppose violently the followers of the Faith, the latter are advised to be rather careful of their opponents. They should not take any one of them into

confidence. Their very words betray enmity and reflect that which is deep-seated in their hearts. Should the followers of the Faith develop in them the spirit of steadfast devotion to righteousness, their enemies can do no harm to them; much less shall they ever succeed against them.

[118] O ye who believe! Do not repose confidence in anyone outside of your own circle. They will not miss any opportunity to harm you; indeed they will gloat over your sufferings. Hatred is clearly manifest in what they say. But what they conceal in their breasts is something more vile. We have assuredly afforded you clear caution, if only ye can understand.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا
بِطَانَةً مِّن دُونِكُمْ لَا يَأْلُونَكُمْ
خَبَالًا ط وَدُّوا مَا عَنِتُّمْ ج قَدْ
بَدَتِ الْبَغْضَاءُ مِنْ أَفْوَاهِهِمْ صلے
وَمَا تُخْفِي صُدُورُهُمْ أَكْبَرُ ط
قَدْ بَيَّنَّا لَكُمُ الْآيَاتِ إِن كُنتُمْ
تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١١٨﴾

[119] Mark! Ye love them; but they love you not, although ye believe in their entire Book. And when they meet you, they say: "We believe!" but when they are by themselves, they swear at you in rage. Say: "Perish in your rage". God knoweth truly what is at work in (their) breasts.

هَا أَنتُمْ أُولَاءِ تُحِبُّونَهُمْ وَلَا
يُحِبُّونَكُمْ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْكِتَابِ
كُلِّهِ ج وَإِذَا لَقُوكُمْ قَالُوا آمَنَّا صلے ج
وَإِذَا خَلَوْا عَضُّوا عَلَيْكُمُ الْأَنَامِلَ
مِنَ الْغَيْظِ ط قُلْ مُوتُوا بِغَيْظِكُمْ ط
إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ ﴿١١٩﴾

[120] If anything good happens to you, it grieveth them, and when anything untoward befalleth you, they rejoice over it. But if ye be steadfast and cautious, their guile will in no way harm you: verily, God is well aware of what they do!

إِن تَمْسَسْكُمْ حَسَنَةٌ تَسُؤْهُمْ ز
وَإِن تُصِبْكُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ يَفْرَحُوا
بِهَا ط وَإِن تَصْبِرُوا وَتَتَّقُوا
لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ كَيْدُهُمْ شَيْئًا ط
إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ مُحِيطٌ ﴿١٢٠﴾ ع

SECTION 13

The battles of Badr and Uhad prove that success attends only those who are steadfast in their faith who strenuously persevere in their resolves and abstain from things undesirable.

On the occasion of the battle of Badr, the followers of the Faith possessed both these qualities; so much so, that they defeated their enemy force, though it was superior in numbers. But on the field of Uhad, the followers of the Faith did not rise equal to the occasion, and failed in displaying the qualities which made for success. The result was that they suffered losses and could not inflict a defeat on the enemy. Several important issues arising out of this experience call for attention:

(1) At the time of Uhad, the general opinion among the followers of the Faith was to go out of the city to meet the enemy; but the hypocrites among them schemed against the proposition with the result that two of the tribes declined to follow the rest. So they entered on their campaign with the spirit of resolution weakened and the result was what it had to be.

(2) However hardened in disbelief one's followers are, the leader at any rate should not lose hope of their reform, but should continue to entertain the hope of their receiving divine grace and forgiveness.

In the battle of Uhad the enemy repeatedly attacked the person of the Prophet and desired to kill him. But the Prophet never wavered in his deep concern for their spiritual welfare. Notwithstanding the strain and suffering, he continued to entertain in his heart no thought other than that of the reform and the spiritual welfare of his enemies.

[121] And recall to mind the occasion when thou didst go forth at early morn from thy home that thou mightest place the

وَاِذْ غَدَوْتَ مِنْ اَهْلِكَ تُبَوِّئُ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ مَقَاعِدَ لِلْقِتَالِ ؕ

faithful in their proper positions in the battle field—and God is the Hearer, the Knower.

وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٢١﴾

[122] Remember how some of your men were on the verge of losing heart, although they knew that God was the protector of both. It is meet that the faithful lay their trust in God alone.

إِذْ هَمَّتْ طَّآئِفَتَانِ مِنكُمْ
أَن تَفْشَلَا وَاللَّهُ وَلِيُّهُمَا وَعَلَى
اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٢٢﴾

[123] (As you are aware) God had already succoured you at Badr when you were in a miserable plight. Be mindful of God that you may grow thankful!

وَلَقَدْ نَصَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ بِبَدْرٍ وَأَنتُمْ
أَذِلَّةٌ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿١٢٣﴾

[124] O Prophet! Remember the occasion when you were saying to the faithful: "Is it not enough for you that your Lord aideth you (against the three thousand men of the enemy) with three thousand angels sent down from on high.

إِذْ تَقُولُ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَلَن يَكْفِيَكُمْ
أَن يُمِدَّكُمْ رَبُّكُم بِثَلَاثَةِ آلَافٍ
مِّنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ مُنزَلِينَ ﴿١٢٤﴾

[125] "Yea! But if ye be steadfast and be mindful of God, though the foe come upon you this very instant, your Lord will help you even with five thousand angels in full array."

بَلَىٰ إِن تَصْبِرُوا وَتَتَّقُوا وَ
يَأْتُوكُم مِّن فَوْرِهِمْ هَٰذَا يُمْدِدْكُمْ
رَبُّكُم بِخَمْسَةِ آلَافٍ مِّنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ
مُسَوِّمِينَ ﴿١٢٥﴾

[126] And God hath not reminded you of this except that it should serve you as good tiding, and to let your heart be at rest. As for help, it cometh not except from God, the Mighty the Wise—

وَمَا جَعَلَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بُشْرَىٰ لَكُمْ
وَلِتَطْمَئِنَّ قُلُوبُكُم بِهِ وَمَا النَّصْرُ
إِلَّا مِنْ عِندِ اللَّهِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَكِيمِ ﴿١٢٦﴾

[127] Except also that He

لِيَقْطَعَ طَرَفًا مِّنَ الَّذِينَ

might disable a section of the disbelievers or humiliate them, so that they might retreat in frustration.

كَفَرُوٓا۟ أَوْ يَكْبِتَهُمْ فَيَنقَلِبُوا۟ خَآئِبِينَ ﴿١٢٧﴾

[128] It is none of thy concern (O Prophet) whether He turn to them (in forgiveness) or chastise them—although it is clear that they are the aggressors.

لَيْسَ لَكَ مِنَ ٱلْأَمْرِ شَىْءٌ أَوْ يَتُوبَ عَلَيْهِمْ أَوْ يُعَذِّبَهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ ظَٰلِمُونَ ﴿١٢٨﴾

[129] Whatever is in the heavens and the earth is God's. He forgiveth whom He will, and whom He will, He chastiseth, and God indeed is Forgiving and Merciful.

وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ يَغْفِرُ لِمَن يَشَآءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَن يَشَآءُ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٢٩﴾

Section 14

O ye followers of the Faith! The blow that was dealt to you on the field of Uhad must afford you a painful lesson. It must bring home to you that you should cleanse yourselves of all the impurities which have weakened your hearts. Of these the greatest weakness is your inordinate love of money. So long as these exist in you the spirit of sacrifice for a good cause will not arise in you.

The Prophet of Islām had stationed a group of his followers on a hillock. He had asked them not to budge from the place. But when the Muslim forces successfully withstood the onslaughts of the enemy and the latter were falling back, the party stationed on the hill, barring ten of them, grew restless in their desire to loot the spoils of war. So leaving their post of duty, they engaged themselves in loot. The enemy taking note of this, rallied back quickly and took them unaware. It was this incident which turned the victory of the Muslims into defeat.

The real cause for the defection of those stationed on the hillock was their inordinate love for money. Since the practice

of usury in those days was an attractive means of increasing one's wealth, the *Qur'ān*, in this passage, dwells on the evils of usury. The multiplying of interest without end had proved a source of great hardship for the debtors, and since the creditors were not inclined to give up their interest, the order was issued by the *Qur'ān* that should the creditors desire to purify their hearts, they were to give up the interest due to them. The Qur'ānic order was that they must relinquish their claim to it absolutely. The battle of Uhad had demonstrated lack of self-discipline among the followers of the Faith. By issuing this order the *Qur'ān* desired to develop in them the sense of self-discipline and restraint. It was very hard for them to obey God and the Prophet in this respect.

The way to prosperity lies in cultivating righteousness. The *Qur'ān* points out that the truly righteous are those who, both in affluent and straitened circumstances, spend in the way of God out of what God hath given them, who control their anger and who forgive others, and who repent for any sin committed and seek forgiveness of God.

[130] O Ye who believe! Do not practice usury, doubling the interest over and over again. But be mindful of God that ye may prosper.

[131] And dread the Fire prepared for the unbelievers!

[132] And obey God and the Apostle that ye may be blessed!

[133] And hasten for forgiveness from your Lord and for a paradise vast as the heavens and the Earth prepared for those who are mindful of God—

[134] For those who give to others, alike in affluent and straitened circumstances, and

يَاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تَاْكُلُوا
الرِّبٰوٓا اَضْعَافًا مُّضٰعَفَةً ۖ وَّاتَّقُوا
اللّٰهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُوْنَ ﴿١٣٠﴾
وَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ الَّتِيْٓ اُعِدَّتْ لِلْكٰفِرِيْنَ ﴿١٣١﴾
وَاَطِيْعُوا اللّٰهَ وَالرَّسُوْلَ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تُرْحَمُوْنَ ﴿١٣٢﴾
وَسَارِعُوْٓا اِلٰى مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّنْ رَّبِّكُمْ
وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمٰوٰتُ وَالْاَرْضُ
اُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِيْنَ ﴿١٣٣﴾
الَّذِيْنَ يُنْفِقُوْنَ فِي السَّرَّآءِ وَ
الضَّرَّآءِ وَالْكٰظِمِيْنَ الْغَيْظَ

who master their anger, and forgive others,—God indeed loveth those who do good—

[135] And who having done a base deed or committed a wrong against their own selves, remember God and implore forgiveness of their sins,—and who will forgive sins but God alone?—and who do not persist wilfully in any course of wrong action.

[136] Pardon from their Lord shall be their recompense and gardens in which streams flow; therein shall they abide!

وَالْعَافِينَ عَنِ النَّاسِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٣٤﴾ وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا فَعَلُوا فَاحِشَةً أَوْ ظَلَمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ ذَكَرُوا اللَّهَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا لِذُنُوبِهِمْ وَمَنْ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَلَمْ يُصِرُّوا عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلُوا وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٣٥﴾ أُولَٰئِكَ جَزَاؤُهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ وَجَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا ۚ وَنِعْمَ أَجْرُ الْعَامِلِينَ ﴿١٣٦﴾

The *Qur'ān* points out that what had happened was nothing peculiar to them. The Law of God always takes that course. Those who conform to the directions of God always prosper, and those who go against them perish. The battle of Uhad should serve as an eye-opener; but it should not dishearten them. What really matters in the struggle of life is the strength of faith. Should that be gained, the end will always be bright.

The battle of Uhad had clearly distinguished between those who were sincere and those who were not. It had given the faithful the requisite experience, painful though it was. This experience did enable them to discard every form of weakness and prepare them to be resolute and steadfast in moments of crisis.

[137] And goodly is the wage of those who labour. Many were the systems in force before you.

قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ سُنَنٌ فَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانْظُرُوا

Go about then in the land and see what hath been the end of those who disregarded them.

كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ ١٣٧

[138] This is a manifesto to mankind and a guidance and counsel to those mindful of God.

هَٰذَا بَيَانٌ لِّلنَّاسِ وَهُدًى وَمَوْعِظَةٌ لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ١٣٨

[139] And do not lose heart and be not sorrowful for if ye be men of faith, you shall surely gain the upper hand.

وَلَا تَهِنُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَنتُمُ الْأَعْلَوْنَ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ١٣٩

[140] If ye have received a wound (at Uhad) a like wound hath been received by others (at Badr). We make these moments go round among men, that God may know who they are who are men of faith, and that He may select from among you those who shall be examples to others—and God loveth not the wrong-doers—

إِن يَمْسَسْكُمْ قَرْحٌ فَقَدْ مَسَّ الْقَوْمَ قَرْحٌ مِّثْلُهُ ۚ وَتِلْكَ الْأَيَّامُ نُدَاوِلُهَا بَيْنَ النَّاسِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَيَتَّخِذَ مِنكُمْ شُهَدَاءَ ۗ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الظَّالِمِينَ ١٤٠

[141] That God may (through hard trials) bring out the worth of those who are men of faith, and expose those who are not.

وَلِيُمَحِّصَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَيَمْحَقَ الْكَافِرِينَ ١٤١

Mere lip profession of faith will not give you the blessings and good results that naturally flow from sincerity in faith. Success depends on steadfastness in the field of action.

[142] O Muslims! Think ye that you would enter Paradise by simply avowing your faith and without proving before God which of you have struggled hard in His

أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَن تَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَعْلَمِ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا

cause and 'have endured steadfastly?

[143] You had yearned for death in the cause of God, while you were still in Medina and made much of your wish to come out of Medina and face the enemy. But now that you are faced with death, you are simply dazed.

مِنكُمْ وَيَعْلَمَ الصَّٰبِرِينَ ﴿١٤٢﴾ وَلَقَدْ كُنتُمْ تَمَنَّوْنَ الْمَوْتَ مِن قَبْلِ أَن تَلْقَوْهُ فَقَدْ رَأَيْتُمُوهُ وَأَنتُمْ تَنظُرُونَ ﴿١٤٣﴾

Section 15

The things that matter in religion are the principles and the values of life which it upholds, and not the personalities who expound it, however high placed. A personality is of importance only as one who expounds a principle of life, or shows the way to truth. We cannot turn away from truth simply because the person directing our attention to it is absent from our midst or has ceased to exist. It is because of the truth one sponsors that we recognise his personality. Truth is not truth simply because some one says it is truth. It is so, on its own merits.

In the battle of Uhad, someone had raised the alarm that the Prophet of Islam was killed. Many of his followers felt highly depressed on hearing this. Some of them exclaimed that there was no good in fighting on any further. Indeed, some of them who were not sincerely attached to the Faith openly asserted that a true prophet can never be killed on any battle-field. The *Qur'ān* refers to this development in this passage. The Prophet of Islam was indeed a messenger of God and it is evident that even like all other prophets, he was to pass away from this world. So, if he were to pass away, would they who had believed in him till then, give up the path of truth as if the love of truth was not for its own sake but for the sake of a particular person. If he had died on the field of Uhad, would the love of God which they professed also die out? On the other

hand, if they were fighting for the cause of truth, them, that truth held good while he would be no more even as it held good while he was alive, and would hold so always as Truth.

[144] Mohammad is no more than an apostle. Apostles before him have passed away. If he die or be slain, will ye then turn on your heels? And he who turneth on his heels, shall not in the least injure God: and God will soon reward the grateful.

وَمَا مُحَمَّدٌ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ أَفَإِنْ مَاتَ أَوْ قُتِلَ انْقَلَبْتُمْ عَلَىٰ أَعْقَابِكُمْ وَمَنْ يَنْقَلِبْ عَلَىٰ عَقِبَيْهِ فَلَنْ يَضُرَّ اللَّهَ شَيْئًا وَسَيَجْزِي اللَّهُ الشَّاكِرِينَ ﴿١٤٤﴾

[145] No one dies except with God's leave. The hour is fixed. He who desireth his reward to be of this world, that We will give him; and he who desireth his reward to be of the world to come, that will We give him; and swiftly will We reward the grateful.

وَمَا كَانَ لِنَفْسٍ أَنْ تَمُوتَ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ كِتَابًا مُؤَجَّلًا وَمَنْ يُرِدْ ثَوَابَ الدُّنْيَا نُؤْتِهِ مِنْهَا وَمَنْ يُرِدْ ثَوَابَ الْآخِرَةِ نُؤْتِهِ مِنْهَا وَسَنَجْزِي الشَّاكِرِينَ ﴿١٤٥﴾

The true believer is he who does not get disheartened when faced with hardships, or yields to tyranny. The *Qu'rān* asserts that such a person never loses heart, nor shows any weakness on the battle-field, nor lays down his arms in abject humility.

[146] Many were the prophets on whose side fought a large number of godly men, and they lost not heart because of what befell them in the cause of God. Neither did they weaken nor did

وَكَأَيِّنْ مِنْ نَبِيٍّ قَاتَلَ مَعَهُ رِبِّيُّونَ كَثِيرٌ فَمَا وَهَنُوا لِمَا أَصَابَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَمَا ضَعُفُوا

they give in,—And God loveth those who endure with steadfastness—

وما استكانوا ۗ والله يحب الصابرين ﴿١٤٦﴾

[147] Nor, when they were pressed hard by trials and tribulations did they say anything except this: "O Lord! forgive us our sins and anything overdone in any of our actions, and set our feet firm and help us against the unbelieving folk."

وما كان قولهم إلا أن قالوا ربنا اغفر لنا ذنوبنا وإسرافنا في أمرنا وثبت أقدامنا وانصرنا على القوم الكافرين ﴿١٤٧﴾

[148] Then God gave them a return appropriate to the life of this world, and an excellent return appropriate to the life of the Hereafter. And God loveth those who do good.

فآتاهم الله ثواب الدنيا وحسن ثواب الآخرة ۗ والله يحب المحسنين ﴿١٤٨﴾ ع

SECTION 16

The enemies of your Faith, in your present depressed state, would like you to feel tired of your pursuit of Truth, and so they try to over-awe you by reciting to you wild stories of their strength. But if you remain steadfast, and lay your trust on Divine help rather than on any human strength or aid, you will find that the day is not far off when the enemy will begin to tremble at the very thought of you.

Those who have before them no serious objective born of sincere beliefs can have no high resolves roused in them. This is a privilege especially reserved for those who are attached to truth. And whenever a body of weak-minded people come out into the field against a people inspired by faith and conviction, they never overcome, despite their pomp and power, the believing folk.

Such was the situation at the time of the advent of the *Qur'ān*

when a small band of its followers had to contend against a huge body of detractors. But however few in number and however poor in resources, they had the strength of their beliefs and convictions to sustain their spirit. The result was that the multitude all over Arabia had eventually to yield to them.

[149] O ye who believe! If you pay heed to what the unbelievers say, they will cause you to relapse (into your old ways) and you will then turn losers.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِن تُطِيعُوا۟ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ يَرُدُّوكُمْ عَلَىٰٓ أَعْقَٰبِكُمْ فَتَنقَلِبُوا۟ خَٰسِرِينَ ﴿١٤٩﴾

[150] Mark! It is God who is your liege Lord, and He is the best of helpers!

بَلِ ٱللَّهُ مَوْلَىٰكُمْ ۖ وَهُوَ خَيْرُ ٱلنَّٰصِرِينَ ﴿١٥٠﴾

[151] Anon, We shall cast a dread into the hearts of those who have not believed, because they have associated others with God for which He hath issued no sanction; and Fire shall be their abode—and how vile this dwelling place of seducers!

سَنُلْقِى فِى قُلُوبِ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ ٱلرُّعْبَ بِمَآ أَشْرَكُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ مَا لَمْ يُنَزِّلْ بِهِۦ سُلْطَٰنًا ۖ وَمَأْوَىٰهُمُ ٱلنَّارُ ۚ وَبِئْسَ مَثْوَى ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿١٥١﴾

The hypocrites are frightening you by reminding you of the happenings at Uhad so that you should no longer muster courage to engage with the enemy once again. But you know well what exactly happened at Uhad: Even on that occasion, the victory was on your side as had been promised by God. In fact the enemy had fallen back. It was only what you did at the critical moment by disobeying the order of the Prophet that gave a wrong impression to the hypocrites among you. You left the post of your duty and turned to gather booty. The course of the battle took a different turn and you did not achieve the success that was anticipated. So what eventually

happened was not due to the strength of the enemy or their numbers of which the hypocrites frightened you. On the other hand, the result such as it was, was due to your disobedience and weakness of heart. You should never feel cowed down by the enemy's strength and numbers. What you should do is to cultivate and develop in you the spirit of steadfast endurance.

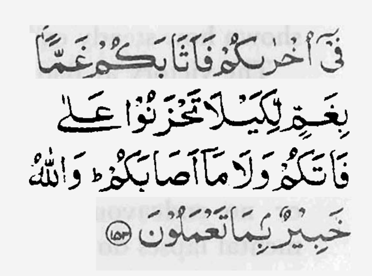
وَلَقَدْ صَدَقَكُمُ اللّٰهُ وَعْدَهٗۤ اِذْ
تَحُسُّوْنَهُمْ بِاِذْنِهٖ ۚ حَتّٰۤى اِذَا فَشِلْتُمْ
وَتَنَازَعْتُمْ فِى الْاَمْرِ وَعَصَيْتُمْ
مِّنْۢ بَعْدِ مَاۤ اَرٰىكُمْ مَّا تُحِبُّوْنَ ؕ
مِنْكُمْ مَّنْ يُّرِيْدُ الدُّنْيَا وَ
مِنْكُمْ مَّنْ يُّرِيْدُ الْاٰخِرَةَ ۚ
ثُمَّ صَرَفَكُمْ عَنْهُمْ لِيَبْتَلِيَكُمْ ۚ
وَلَقَدْ عَفَا عَنْكُمْ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ ذُوْ
فَضْلٍ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿١٥٢﴾

[152] And mark! The fact is that God did indeed keep His promise of success to you so long as you were engaged in putting down the enemy in accordance with His directions till you blenched and began to dispute among yourselves about the order whether they should stick to the post which they had been ordered to guard, and eventually disregarded the order of the Prophet and this at the moment when the prospect of victory was in sight and you were shown that (booty) for which you had a traditional liking. For among you there were some who desired this world, namely the spoils of war, and some who desired the next by remaining steadfast and courting martyrdom. Then in order to test you, He diverted your attention from them so as to give your victory the aspect of defeat. Yet hath He forgiven you; for God is indulgent to the believers.

اِذْ تُصْعِدُوْنَ وَلَا تَلْوٗنَ عَلٰۤى
اَحَدٍ وَّالرَّسُوْلُ يَدْعُوْكُمْ

[153] Remember the occasion when the Prophet was from the

rear calling you, and you were rushing up the heights taking no heed of any one! Then, you had to go through trial after trial that you might not hereafter rue the loss of anything or bemoan over anything that might befall you. God is aware of what you do.



When a large body of Muslims began to run away from the field of battle in a perplexed state, the Prophet who was surrounded by a few loyal adherents cried out: "Creatures of God turn to me! Creatures of God turn to me! Wither are you running away!" It is to this incident that the *Qur'ān* refers in the following passage. Those who were sincere in their loyalty to the Prophet but were at the moment in a state of alarm, consequent upon the new development among the Muslims, suddenly realised the danger in which the Prophet was placed and straightaway fell upon the enemy and not only drove them out of the field, but pursued them till they reached Hamara-Al-Asad, a place eight miles from Madina. But those who were either timid or secretly disloyal to the Prophet lagged behind to save their lives. They saw thereafter that they were not responsible for what had happened. In fact they even bragged that had it been the wish of God to give them victory, what happened would certainly not have happened. The *Qur'ān*, however, points out that such thoughts do not occur to those whose hearts have been truly enlivened by the teachings of Islam. It states that victory lies always with God. He just grants it to those who are staunch in their faith and abstain from evil.

Even as the success on the field of Badr, the temporary set-back on the field of Uhad also served as a lesson for the followers of the Faith. It is not enough that one who is practising running should acquire the capacity to run smoothly. He should also learn how to resume his steadiness after clearing

obstacles or on having a fall or two. The battle of Badr has shown how steady endeavour meets with good reward.

The victory at Badr and the tidings of divine aid to follow had created in the minds of the followers of the Faith a certain amount of indifference to the realities of life; so much so that they had become complacent and thought that, endeavour or no endeavour, success was their portion in life. Such mental lapses do manifest themselves very often after the first round of success, and that is a very dangerous turn in life. The inevitable result is that men become proud and negligent, and in the fitness of things this tendency has to be arrested. So the battle of Uhad had to make it clear to the Muslims that the divine promise of success always held good and was there for them to enjoy. So every moment in life is subject to certain laws peculiar to every action, and these produce good results only when one conforms to them. Any body of people who choose to neglect these laws deny to themselves in consequence the benefits of their operation. That was why the Muslims had already been forewarned of this law of life. The temporary set-back at Uhad was to cleanse the Muslim mind of the dross that had come to clog it.

The *Qur'ān* points out that a true believer is he who is not afraid of death. He does not falter at the thought of death. He knows that it is unavoidable for a living being and that it is part of his function in life to welcome it in the way of truth or of God which surely is the road to divine protection and approbation.

On the other hand, they who laugh at those who sacrifice their lives in the way of God and brag that they would have been better off had they not followed that way, are the people who have indeed denied themselves the grace of faith. They seem to fancy that death faces one only on the battle-field and that those who stay at home are to have no death. It is to these aspects of life that the *Qur'ān* draws our attention in the following verses.

[154] Then after this tribulation, God caused calmness to descend upon them, and the sense of security seized a section of you while another section who were self-obsessed indulged, in sheer ignorance, in unmeaning suspicions against God. They said: "Did we have any voice in this affair?" Say: "Verily the affair rests entirely with God". In fact, they declare not to thee what they have hidden in their hearts. They only say: "Had we had any voice in this affair, none of us would have been slain here". Say: "Even were you in your homes, those who were destined to be slain would surely have gone forth to the places where they now lie. And (all this has happened) that God might make manifest what was in your breasts and to purify your hearts." And God knoweth what the breasts harbour.

ثُمَّ أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ
الْغَمِّ أَمَنَةً نُعَاسًا يَغْشَىٰ
طَائِفَةً مِنْكُمْ ۖ وَطَائِفَةٌ قَدْ
أَهَمَّتْهُمْ أَنْفُسُهُمْ يَظُنُّونَ
بِاللَّهِ غَيْرَ الْحَقِّ ظَنَّ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ ۖ
يَقُولُونَ هَلْ لَنَا مِنَ الْأَمْرِ
مِنْ شَيْءٍ ۗ قُلْ إِنَّ الْأَمْرَ كُلَّهُ
لِلَّهِ ۗ يُخْفُونَ فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ مَا
لَا يُبْدُونَ لَكَ ۖ يَقُولُونَ لَوْ
كَانَ لَنَا مِنَ الْأَمْرِ شَيْءٌ مَا قُتِلْنَا
هَاهُنَا ۗ قُلْ لَوْ كُنْتُمْ فِي بُيُوتِكُمْ
لَبَرَزَ الَّذِينَ كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقَتْلُ
إِلَىٰ مَضَاجِعِهِمْ ۖ وَلِيَبْتَلِيَ اللَّهُ
مَا فِي صُدُورِكُمْ وَلِيُمَحِّصَ مَا فِي
قُلُوبِكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ ﴿١٥٤﴾

[155] Truly it was Satan who, taking advantage of some of their doings, had sought to make those of you to fail in duty who had turned back on the day when the two hosts met. But God hath pardoned them; for God is Forgiving, Forbearing.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَوَلَّوْا مِنْكُمْ يَوْمَ الْتَقَى
الْجَمْعَانِ إِنَّمَا اسْتَزَلَّهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ
بِبَعْضِ مَا كَسَبُوا ۖ وَلَقَدْ عَفَا اللَّهُ
عَنْهُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ ﴿١٥٥﴾

Section 17

[156] O ye who believe! Be not like those who disbelieve and who, in res-

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَكُونُوا

pect of their brethren who had gone on travel in the land or had been engaged in fighting, say: "Had they stayed with us, they would not have died or been slain", in order that God might rouse (in you) regrets like those they entertain in their own hearts. It is God who causeth to live and causeth to die; and God seeth all that you do.

كَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَقَالُوا لِإِخْوَانِهِمْ إِذَا ضَرَبُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ أَوْ كَانُوا غُزًّى لَّوْ كَانُوا عِندَنَا مَا مَاتُوا وَمَا قُتِلُوا لِيَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ ذَٰلِكَ حَسْرَةً فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿١٥٦﴾

[157] Should you be slain or die in the cause of God, (then the reward) of Divine protection and mercy, surely, shall be of greater value than what they had hoarded up.

وَلَئِن قُتِلْتُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَوْ مُتُّمْ لَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرَحْمَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّمَّا يَجْمَعُونَ ﴿١٥٧﴾

[158] And whether you die or be slain, to God shall ye be gathered!

وَلَئِن مُّتُّمْ أَوْ قُتِلْتُمْ لَإِلَى اللَّهِ تُحْشَرُونَ ﴿١٥٨﴾

In this connection the *Qur'ān* addresses the Prophet to draw his attention to the function of leadership:

(1) It is a blessing of God that you are by nature gentle and tender-hearted. Had it been otherwise, people would not have been drawn to you and they would not have developed such strong attachment to you.

(2) Some of your followers betrayed serious weakness on the field of Uhad. But it becomes your gentility and forbearance to forgive them.

(3) Your procedure in matters of peace and war should not be to decide on anything except in consultation with those who are competent to advise.

(4) The procedure may take this form. First, hold consultations and then make up your mind to decide on something definite. Once you are resolved in your mind on anything, stick to it with firmness. Consultation at the proper moment is necessary, and resolution at the proper moment is equally necessary. The question of

resolution or decision does not arise till the consultation is over, but once a thing is definitely resolved in mind, nothing should be allowed to deflect you from your resolution.

فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ لِنتَ لَهُمْ ۖ
وَلَوْ كُنتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ
لَانفَضُّوا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ ۖ فَاعْفُ
عَنْهُمْ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ وَشَاوِرْهُمْ
فِي الْأَمْرِ ۖ فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى
اللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ ﴿١٥٩﴾

[159] It is part of divine mercy that they are to deal with one so soft-hearted as thou art. Wert thou harsh in speech or of hard heart, they would have broken away from thee; so, pardon them, and also ask for them divine forgiveness and consult them in matters of importance, and when thou art resolved on any course (go ahead) and trust in God, for, God loveth those who lay their trust (in Him).

إِن يَنصُرْكُمُ اللَّهُ فَلَا غَالِبَ لَكُمْ ۖ
وَإِن يَخْذُلْكُمْ فَمَن ذَا الَّذِي يَنصُرُكُم
مِّن بَعْدِهِ ۗ وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٦٠﴾

[160] If God helps you, none can overcome you. But, if He forsakes you, who is it then who can help you thereafter? In God then let the faithful place their trust.

The *Qur'ān* now addresses the Muslims. It tells them that when the Prophet takes counsel of them before deciding on any line of action, it should behove them to obey him implicitly. He is the prophet of God. It is impossible for a prophet of God, who offers guidance to God's creatures, ever to play false with them. The way of life of the untruthful is so fundamentaly different from the way of life of the truthful that there is absolutely no chance of mistaking the one for the other. However pious the outward bearing of a wicked person, his pose can never deceive one. He will certainly do something or other inadvertently which will assuredly expose him.

How can one who draws the attention of his followers to the way of God, who explains to them the commandments of God and the purposes underlying divine injunctions, and who exerts himself to purify their hearts, ever fail in his function as a leader and play false with them?

[161] A prophet never plays false. And he who shall play false shall bring with him his earnings on the Day of Resurrection. Then shall every one be paid in full what he hath worked for, and none shall be dealt with unfairly.

وَمَا كَانَ لِنَبِيٍّ أَنْ يَغُلَّ ۚ وَمَنْ يَغْلُلْ يَأْتِ بِمَا غَلَّ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ۚ ثُمَّ تُوَفَّىٰ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿١٦١﴾

[162] Is he who seeketh the pleasure of God to be placed on the same footing as he who hath drawn on himself the displeasure of God and whose abode shall be Hell?—and how wretched the abode!

أَفَمَنِ اتَّبَعَ رِضْوَانَ اللَّهِ كَمَنْ بَاءَ بِسَخَطٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَمَأْوَاهُ جَهَنَّمُ ۚ وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيرُ ﴿١٦٢﴾

[163] These vary in rank in the estimation of God and God is aware of all that they do.

هُمْ دَرَجَاتٌ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ بَصِيرٌ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٦٣﴾

[164] God was indeed gracious to the faithful, when He raised up for them an apostle out of their own people, who rehearses to them His revelations, and reforms them, and instructs them in the Book and its objective—and hitherto they were in a state of rank ignorance.

لَقَدْ مَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ بَعَثَ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِنْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِنْ كَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ ﴿١٦٤﴾

The battle of Uhad was a decisive factor in exposing the hypocrites who used to intermingle with the faithful followers of the Prophet as if they were one with them. On this occasion, the veil of hypocrisy was lifted. From beginning to end, from the time when consultations were being held to fight the enemy, even till after the battle was over, there was hardly an occasion when the hypocrites did not try to create disaffection among the rank and file of the faithful. When the majority view among the faithful was to go out of the city and fight the enemy in the open, the hypocrites tried to prevent them from taking such a step as their alternative was to stay in the city, which meant that arrangements should be made to defend it. So, when the hypocrites were asked what measures should be

taken to defend the city, they offered diverse excuses on the ground that they did not expect any fighting at all. Else they would certainly have agreed to make the necessary preparations for defence. This was their attitude before the battle of Uhad. But what was their attitude after the battle which, through the defection of a party among the faithful, was not quite a victory? They conceived of fresh mischief. Sometimes they said that the result was due to an utter disregard for the advice they had offered. Sometimes they said that no useful purpose would be served by frequent fights and that safety lay in reconciling with the enemy. Their only purpose was to create diffidence and dejection in the minds of the faithful and reduce them to a state of indecision and inaction. It may be stated that while retreating from the field of Uhad, the enemy had announced that they would come back and fight a decisive battle. So, in the following year, the Muslims prepared themselves for another battle and, in fact, came out of the city to meet the enemy. But it so happened that the enemy was not to be found. They had not the courage to stir out of Mecca. So the Muslims, having camped for a few days outside Madina, returned to the city elated in spirits. But even on this occasion, the hypocrites who were in league with the enemy, tried to create all sorts of mischief among the Muslims by spreading false stories about the comparative strength of the enemy calculated to depress the faithful. The *Qur'ān* refers in the following verses to these tactics of the hypocrites, and announces that unless they desist from their evil pursuit, their veil of hypocrisy will be taken off their faces.

[165] When suffering was caused to you at Uhad, you forgot that you had caused twice as much to the foe at Badr, and yet you exclaimed, "Whence is this?" O Prophet! Say to these people, "It is what hath been brought to you by your own selves, since

أَوَلَمَّآ أَصَابَتْكُم مُّصِيبَةٌ
قَدْ أَصَبْتُم مِّثْلَيْهَا قُلْتُمْ

you fell into a lapse and disregarded the orders given you by God. Had you but obeyed these orders, you would not have brought on yourselves this suffering. Verily, God hath power over all things."

انى هذا ۖ قل هو من عند انفسكم ۗ ان الله على كل شيء قدير (١٦٥)

[166] What befell you on the day when the two hosts met, was certainly by the will of God, in order that He might make it known who were the truly faithful.

وما اصابكم يوم التقى الجمعن فباذن الله وليعلم المؤمنين (١٦٦)

[167] And when they (the hypocrites) had been told: "Come! fight in the way of God or defend yourselves," they had answered: "If we are certain that there will be a fight, we will certainly follow you." Nearer were they that day to faithlessness than to faithfulness! What is on their lips is not in their hearts. But God knew what they had concealed.

وليعلم الذين نافقوا ۚ وقيل لهم تعالوا قاتلوا في سبيل الله او ادفعوا ۖ قالوا لو نعلم قتالا لاتبعنكم ۗ هم للكفر يومئذ اقرب منهم للايمان ۚ يقولون بافواههم ما ليس في قلوبهم ۗ والله اعلم بما يكتمون (١٦٧)

[168] They who had stayed away spoke of their (slain) brethren: "Had they listened to our counsels, they would not have been slain." Say: "Keep back death from yourselves, if ye speak the truth."

الذين قالوا لاخوانهم وقعدوا لو اطاعونا ما قتلوا ۗ قل فادرءوا عن انفسكم الموت ان كنتم صدقين (١٦٨)

[169] And do not regard those slain in the cause of God as dead. Nay! alive are they with their Lord, well provided with sustenance,

ولا تحسبن الذين قتلوا في سبيل الله امواتا ۚ بل احياء عند ربهم يرزقون (١٦٩)

[170] Rejoicing in what God hath vouchsafed to them in His graciousness, and feeling happy at this that on those who are left behind and have not yet joined them, no fear shall come nor grief.

فرحين بما اتىهم الله من فضله ويستبشرون بالذين لم يلحقوا بهم من خلفهم الا خوف عليهم ولا هم يحزنون (١٧٠)

[171] They are filled with joy at the favours of God and at His bounty and (at the know-

يستبشرون بنعمة من الله

ledge) that God doth not allow the wage of the faithful to go to waste.

وَفَضْلٍ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٧١﴾

Section 18

[172] For those who responded to the call of God and the Apostle after the reverses that befell them—for those who acted righteously and were mindful of God, there shall be a great reward.

الَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لِلَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا أَصَابَهُمُ الْقَرْحُ لِلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا مِنْهُمْ وَاتَّقَوْا أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٧٢﴾

[173] When men said to these, "They (the enemy) have mustered strong against you; so beware of them," it only increased their faith, and they said, "Sufficient unto us is God, the Excellent Protector."

الَّذِينَ قَالَ لَهُمُ النَّاسُ إِنَّ النَّاسَ قَدْ جَمَعُوا لَكُمْ فَاخْشَوْهُمْ فَزَادَهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَقَالُوا حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ ﴿١٧٣﴾

[174] They returned therefore with blessings and favours from God, untouched by any harm; and they abided by what was well pleasing to God. And great is the munificence of God:

مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَفَضْلٍ لَّمْ يَمْسَسْهُمْ سُوءٌ وَاتَّبَعُوا رِضْوَانَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ ذُو فَضْلٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿١٧٤﴾

[175] It was none but Satan who hath affrighted you of his adherents; wherefore fear them not but fear Me, if ye be men of faith.

إِنَّمَا ذَٰلِكُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ يُخَوِّفُ أَوْلِيَاءَهُ فَلَا تَخَافُوهُمْ وَخَافُونِ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٧٥﴾

The Divine scheme of things is so devised that good and evil, truth and falsehood, justice and injustice, are allowed to operate, and the divine principle of mercy is to give the utmost latitude to either of these contending forces. The struggle should not depress us. What we have to mark is the result, i.e. which of the two eventually gets the upper hand; and you will find that right always prevails in the end and wrong is vanquished.

[176] Let not those grieve thee who hasten towards infidelity. Verily, no harm can they ever do to God.

وَلَا يَحْزُنكَ الَّذِينَ يُسَارِعُونَ

God desireth not to provide for them any share in the life of the Hereafter: and for them shall be a great chastisement.

فِي الْكُفْرِ ۚ إِنَّهُمْ لَن يَضُرُّوا اللَّهَ
شَيْئًا ۗ يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَلَّا يَجْعَلَ لَهُمْ حَظًّا
فِي الْآخِرَةِ ۖ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٧٦﴾

[177] Truly, those who purchase unfaithfulness at the price of faithfulness shall not hurt God in the least; and for them there shall be a painful chastisement.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ اشْتَرَوُا الْكُفْرَ
بِالْإِيمَانِ لَن يَضُرُّوا اللَّهَ شَيْئًا ج
وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿١٧٧﴾

[178] Let not the unfaithful imagine that the respite We give them is good for them! We give them respite that they may increase in sin; and for them there shall be a shameful chastisement.

وَلَا يَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
أَنَّمَا نُمْلِي لَهُمْ خَيْرٌ لِّأَنفُسِهِمْ ط
إِنَّمَا نُمْلِي لَهُمْ لِيَزْدَادُوا إِثْمًا ج
وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ ﴿١٧٨﴾

The hypocrites have by now been given ample respite. The time has come to discriminate the faithful from the unfaithful. It is certainly not the way of God to single out these hypocrites one by one. He who does not desist from the mischief he is engaged in, will find his very mischief at the proper moment disclose his identity.

[179] It is not in God to let the faithful remain in the state in which they are; He will sift the bad from the good. Neither is it the way of God to disclose to you what is kept in secret. But God chooseth whom He will of His apostles to know it. Believe therefore (ye hypocrites) in God and His apostles; and if ye may yet believe and are mindful of Him, then shall there be for you a great reward.

مَّا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيَذَرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ
عَلَىٰ مَا أَنتُمْ عَلَيْهِ حَتَّىٰ يَمِيزَ
الْخَبِيثَ مِنَ الطَّيِّبِ ط وَمَا
كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُطْلِعَكُمْ عَلَى الْغَيْبِ وَلَٰكِنَّ
اللَّهَ يَجْتَبِي مِن رُّسُلِهِ مَن يَشَاءُ ص
فَآمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ ۚ وَإِن تُؤْمِنُوا
وَتَتَّقُوا فَلَكُمْ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٧٩﴾

It was a trying task for the hypocrites who, as part of discretion, had accepted Islam to contribute to the war fund

or spend anything in the cause of God. Themselves niggardly, they induced others to be equally niggardly.

[180] Let not those who are niggard of what God hath vouchsafed to them in His bounty think that it will bring them any good. Nay! It will augur ill for them. That which they have stinted shall soon turn into a halter round their necks on the Day of Resurrection. All that the heavens and the earth contain is God's. And God is well aware of all that ye do!

وَلَا يَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ يَبْخَلُونَ بِمَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِن فَضْلِهِ هُوَ خَيْرًا لَّهُم ۖ بَلْ هُوَ شَرٌّ لَّهُمْ ۖ سَيُطَوَّقُونَ مَا بَخِلُوا بِهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ۗ وَلِلَّهِ مِيرَاثُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ

SECTION 19

Having dealt with the doubts raised touching the engagement at Uhad, the *Qur'ān* now turns again to address the people of the Book, and announces the triumph that awaiteth its mission of truth. The turning is but natural since the admonition afforded to the hypocrites through the passages above was in reality addressed to the people of the Book from whose ranks most of the hypocrites concerned had been drawn.

The early stage in the prophetic mission, as in every other mission engaged in the propagation of truth, was marked by adversity and lack of funds; and funds were required even in the propagation of truth. But the hypocrites among the faithful, mostly of Jewish origin, did not like giving contributions to the funds of the mission. They expressed surprise that God should be in need of money, and that so frequently, and used to exclaim, "Have we any, immeasurable wealth that we should go on squandering it without end?" The *Qur'ān* incidentally refers here to the love of money which seemed ingrained in the very nature of the Jews and to the fact that it was because of this love of money that they had opposed every goodly mission and even assassinated many a prophet in the past.

[181] God hath surely heard the words (of taunt) of those who said when approached for contributions in the cause of God, "So! God is indigent and we are rich." Anon, We will record what they have said, and the fact of their unjust slaughter of the Prophets, and We will say: "Taste ye the chastisement of the Fire—

لقد سمع الله قول الذين قالوا
إن الله فقير ونحن أغنياء م
سنكتب ما قالوا وقتلهم الأنبياء
بغير حق ونقول ذوقوا عذاب
الحريق ﴿١٨١﴾

[182] This, for what your hands have sent in advance! For, verily, God doth not deal unjustly with His servants."

ذلك بما قدمت أيديكم وأن الله ليس بظلام للعبيد ﴿١٨٢﴾

The Jewish scribes of Medina having failed in all their tactics to thwart the mission of the Prophet, resorted to embarrassing the Prophet by asking him to perform a miracle—the sacrifice known among the Jews as 'Burnt Sacrifice'. They said that they would accept him only when he succeeded in doing it. This sacrifice is described in Leviticus 1:9 in detail. The fire to which the sacrificial animal was consigned was represented as sent down from heaven. Referring to this traditional ritual of the Jews, the *Qur'ān* asks them: Even when such burnt sacrifices were offered by their prophets, why did they kill them wilfully?

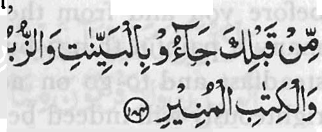
[183] To those who say: "God hath charged us that we believe not in any claiment to prophethood until he brings us an offering which a fire (from heaven) shall consume." Say: "Already have apostles come to you before me with clear signs and with that of which you speak. Wherefore then did you slay them, if ye be men of truth?"

الذين قالوا إن الله عهد
إلينا ألا نؤمن لرسول حتى
يأتينا بقربان تأكله النار ط
قل قد جاءكم رسل من قبلي
بالبينت وبالذي قلتم فلم
قتلتموهم إن كنتم صدقين ﴿١٨٣﴾

[184] Then if they discredit thee, do not lose heart, for apostles be-

فإن كذبوك فقد كذب رسل

fore thee have been equally discredited, although they came with clear proofs and scriptures and the illuminating law.



The *Qur'ān* now turns to the followers of the Faith to apprise them of the situation in which they are placed at the time. It draws their attention to the fact that the people of the Book, namely, the Christians and the Jews, and the infidel Arabs are intent on frustrating their mission. They are subjecting them to every form of persecution. But they will have to endure it if they are to triumph in the end; and triumph comes only through steadfast endurance and strict abstention from every evil thought and deed.

The people of the Book have been enjoined by God to be its custodians and to regard it their duty to preach and uphold its teachings. But they have fallen into wrong ways and have disregarded their covenant with God. What is strange about them is that they still pride themselves to be "the People of the Book," and expect the world to praise them for what they have not done and to do which they do not possess the requisite talent.

Incidentally, the *Qur'ān* warns the followers of the Faith not to develop the afore-mentioned weakness of the people of the Book.

[185] Every one shall taste death, and you shall receive your full recompense only on the day of Resurrection. He who is saved from Fire and is led into Paradise has attained success—And the life of this world is nothing but an illusory asset!

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَآئِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ وَإِنَّمَا تُوَفَّوْنَ أُجُورَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فَمَن زُحْزِحَ عَنِ النَّارِ وَأُدْخِلَ الْجَنَّةَ فَقَدْ فَازَ وَمَا الْحَيَوٰةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَاعُ الْغُرُورِ ﴿١٨٥﴾

[186] Assuredly shall ye be tested by the loss of your possessions and your lives, and ye shall no doubt hear from those who were given the Book

لَتُبْلَوُنَّ فِي أَمْوَالِكُمْ وَأَنفُسِكُمْ وَلَتَسْمَعُنَّ مِنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَٰبَ

When this truth takes hold of one's mind, the spirit within him is charged with a love of devotion to God; so much so, that he bows his head in humility, and he asks of God his mercy and forgiveness.

The way of God is that He never lets a good deed go unrequited. A good deed never goes to waste. So, those who face and bear with steadfastness the trials and tribulations crossing their path of life, surely will not go un-rewarded.

[189] And to God belongeth dominion over the heavens and the earth and God hath power over all things.

[190] Verily, in the creation of the heavens and of the earth and in the alternation of night and day are signs for those gifted with understanding,

[191] Who, standing, sitting or reclining, bear God in mind, and meditate on the creation of the heavens and the earth. "Our Lord!" (Say they) "All this Thou hast not created in vain! Transcendent in purity art Thou! Save us then from the chastisement of Fire!

[192] "O Our Lord! whomsoever thou consigneth to Fire, Thou dost surely cover him with shame—and the wrong-doers have no helpers.

[193] "O Our Lord! We have heard the voice of a crier calling us: 'Believe ye in your Lord', and we have believed. O Our Lord! Forgive us our sins and prevent us from doing anything evil, and

وَلِلّٰهِ مُلْكُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ ۗ
وَاللّٰهُ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ ﴿١٨٩﴾
اِنَّ فِيْ خَلْقِ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ
وَاخْتِلَافِ الَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لَاٰيٰتٍ
لِّاُولِي الْاَلْبَابِ ﴿١٩٠﴾
الَّذِيْنَ يَذْكُرُوْنَ اللّٰهَ قِيٰمًا
وَّقُعُوْدًا وَّعَلٰى جُنُوْبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُوْنَ
فِيْ خَلْقِ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ ۚ رَبَّنَا
مَا خَلَقْتَ هٰذَا بَاطِلًا ۚ
سُبْحٰنَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ ﴿١٩١﴾
رَبَّنَآ اِنَّكَ مَنْ تُدْخِلِ النَّارَ فَقَدْ
اَخْزَيْتَهٗ ۗ وَمَا لِلظّٰلِمِيْنَ مِنْ اَنْصَارٍ ﴿١٩٢﴾
رَبَّنَآ اِنَّنَا سَمِعْنَا مُنَادِيًا يُّنَادِيْ
لِلْاِيْمَانِ اَنْ اٰمِنُوْا بِرَبِّكُمْ
فَاٰمَنَّا ۖ رَبَّنَا فَاغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوْبَنَا
وَكَفِّرْ عَنَّا سَيِّاٰتِنَا وَتَوَفَّنَا مَعَ

receive us back into the company of the righteous.

الْأَبْرَارِ ﴿١٩٣﴾

[194] "O Our Lord! Give us all that thou hast promised us through thy apostles, and put us not to shame on the Day of Resurrection. Verily, Thou dost not go back upon Thy promises."

رَبَّنَا وَآتِنَا مَا وَعَدْتَّنَا عَلَىٰ
رُسُلِكَ وَلَا تُخْزِنَا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ۗ
إِنَّكَ لَا تُخْلِفُ الْمِيعَادَ ﴿١٩٤﴾

[195] Then will their Lord hearken to them, saying: "Certainly will I not suffer the labour of any one among you that laboureth, man or woman, to be lost. The one of you is as the other. So, I will assuredly keep away from sin those who had to flee their country or were driven out of their homes, and have suffered in My cause, and have fought and fallen; and I will also bring them into gardens through which streams flow." This is a recompense from God! And God! A recompense from Him is the best of recompense!

فَاسْتَجَابَ لَهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ أَنِّي لَا
أُضِيعُ عَمَلَ عَامِلٍ مِّنكُم مِّن
ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنثَىٰ ۖ بَعْضُكُم مِّن بَعْضٍ ۖ
فَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا وَأُخْرِجُوا مِن
دِيَارِهِمْ وَأُوذُوا فِي سَبِيلِي
وَقَاتَلُوا وَقُتِلُوا لَأُكَفِّرَنَّ عَنْهُمْ
سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ وَلَأُدْخِلَنَّهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ
تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ ثَوَابًا مِّنْ
عِندِ اللَّهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عِندَهُ حُسْنُ الثَّوَابِ ﴿١٩٥﴾

The chapter begins with the statement that God sends down His instructions for the spiritual welfare of man and that those who follow them prosper in life and achieve success and those who go against them meet with failure, and that it is in pursuance of this purpose that the *Qur'ān* has been delivered. This statement is repeated, for the sake of emphasis, at the close of the chapter as well. The chapter seems to revolve round three things:

(1) However much the opponents of the *Qur'ān* exert themselves, and however much they may, seem well-off in life,

the mission of the *Qur'ān* will assuredly triumph in the end.

(2) The people of the Book who have been opposing the mission of Truth will in the end fail in their opposition. On the other hand, those who have adopted the path of Truth shall fear nothing. They will certainly get the reward of their uprightness and their righteous living. The Law of God is never slack in its course.

(3) The line of action which the faithful are to follow is this: they should cultivate steadfastness, and remain united in action, and remain mindful of God in every situation. Success is theirs if only they follow this line of conduct.

[196] Let not the movements of the unbelievers in the land (indicating prosperity on their part) deceive thee.

لَا يَغُرَّنَّكَ تَقَلُّبُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
فِي الْبِلَادِ ﴿١٩٦﴾

[197] It is but a brief enjoyment. Then shall Hell be their final abode—and wretched the abode!

مَتَاعٌ قَلِيلٌ ثُمَّ مَأْوَاهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ
وَبِئْسَ الْمِهَادُ ﴿١٩٧﴾

[198] But as to those who fear their Lord, for them are gardens through which streams flow; therein shall they abide—a reception from God; and the reception offered to the righteous is the best of receptions.

لَٰكِنِ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا رَبَّهُمْ لَهُمْ
جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ
خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا نُزُلًا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ
وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لِلْأَبْرَارِ ﴿١٩٨﴾

[199] Among the people of the Book are some who believe in God and in what hath been sent down to you, and in what hath been sent down to them, and humble themselves before God. They do not barter the commandments of God for a paltry price. These are they whose recompense awaiteth

وَإِنَّ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ لَمَنْ
يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ
وَمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْهِمْ خَاشِعِينَ لِلَّهِ
لَا يَشْتَرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا
أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ

them with their Lord. And indeed God is not slow in dealing out recompense.

[200] O ye who believe! Exercise patience, and vie in patience and stand united and be mindful of God that it may be well with you.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ ﴿١٩٩﴾
يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اصْبِرُوا وَصَابِرُوا وَرَابِطُوا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٢٠٠﴾

WOMAN—AL-NISA

SECTION 1

It is a marvel of creative evolution that the life of man should be so fashioned by its creator that the entire humanity should constitute a single family and arrange its economy on that basis. That is why He creates to begin with but a single individual so that his progeny might establish natural affinities among themselves.

This single individual procreates a number of individuals; every one of whom in this turn procreates successive generations which in their turn convert themselves into tribes and wider groups, building up for themselves in the process diverse forms of centres of habitation, and organising societies on the basis of blood-relationship.

It is this blood-relationship that supplies the motif for mutual affection and fellowship. So, for the upkeep of society it becomes necessary to determine and safeguard the interests of each individual composing each society. The *Qur'ān* points out that these interests are also implicit in every form of sex relationship and are determined by God to avoid a conflict between them. He who disregards them commits a crime against society.

(1) Since the interests of the orphans deserve the primary attention of society, the *Qur'ān* singles them out for priority of consideration. It points out that those who are in charge of the orphans should be careful not to mix up the property of the orphans with their own in a manner prejudical to the interests of their wards.

(2) It is not permissible for a guardian to enter into marital relations with a female ward just to exploit her property in his personal interests. His conduct in this respect should be above suspicion.

(3) Incidentally, the question of marriage in general crops up for consideration. A man may have more than one wife, though not exceeding four at a time, provided he has the means to support them in a manner just and equitable to one and all. Should he apprehend any dereliction of duty in this respect, he should not have more than one wife.

(4) Since wealth is a means of social security, the *Qur'ān* observes that the property of the ward should be kept in trust for him or her until he or she comes of age since it is not desirable to call upon the ward before reaching this stage to look after his or her affairs.

(5) On the other hand, it will be a crime on the part of the guardian to squander the property of his ward as he liked, lest the ward on coming of age should take hold of it.

(6) The guardian who is himself in well-to-do circumstances should not charge anything for the management of the ward's property. But if he is poor, he can claim an honorarium for his services as may seem normally legitimate.

(7) When the property is to be finally entrusted to the ward on his or her coming of age, the transfer should be done in the presence of proper witnesses.

[1] O ye mankind! Be mindful of your Lord who hath created you out of one single man, and out of him created He his mate, and from the twain hath spread abroad so many men and women! And so, be mindful of God in whose name you seek relationship with one another, and respect this relationship. Verily, God is watchful over you.

[2] Make over to the orphans what belongs to them; and do not substitute worthless

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ
يٰٓاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوْا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِيْ
خَلَقَكُمْ مِّنْ نَّفْسٍ وَّاحِدَةٍ وَّ
خَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا
رِجَالًا كَثِيْرًا وَّنِسَآءً ۚ وَاتَّقُوا
اللّٰهَ الَّذِيْ تَسَآءَلُوْنَ بِهٖ وَالْاَرْحَامَ ۭ
اِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيْبًا ①
وَاٰتُوا الْيَتٰمٰٓى اَمْوَالَهُمْ وَلَا تَتَبَدَّلُوا
الْخَبِيْثَ بِالطَّيِّبِ ۠ وَلَا تَاْكُلُوْٓا

stuff for what is valuable
and consume not their property
along with your own; for,
this is a serious crime.

أَمْوَالَهُمْ إِلَىٰ أَمْوَالِكُمْ ۚ إِنَّهُ
كَانَ حُوبًا كَبِيرًا ﴿٢﴾

[3] But if ye fear that
ye shall not deal fairly
with the female orphan
wards under you then (do not
marry any of them) but marry
other women whom you like,
upto two or three or four;
and if ye shall fear that
ye shall not act equitably
then, marry one only (from among
free women) or (marry in like
order) from among the female
captives under your charge.
This will facilitate just
dealings on your part.

وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تُقْسِطُوا فِي الْيَتَامَىٰ
فَانْكِحُوا مَا طَابَ لَكُمْ مِنَ
النِّسَاءِ مَثْنَىٰ وَثُلَاثَ وَرُبَاعَ ۖ
فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا فَوَاحِدَةً
أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ
أَدْنَىٰ أَلَّا تَعُولُوا ﴿٣﴾

[4] Offer the women their
dower ungrudgingly since they
have a right to it. But if,
of their own free will,
they give back aught thereof
to you, then make use of it
as you will.

وَآتُوا النِّسَاءَ صَدُقَاتِهِنَّ نِحْلَةً ۚ
فَإِنْ طِبْنَ لَكُمْ عَنْ شَيْءٍ مِنْهُ
نَفْسًا فَكُلُوهُ هَنِيئًا مَرِيئًا ﴿٤﴾

[5] And entrust not to
the weak of understanding
the property which God
hath placed with you for
their support, and maintain
them therewith and clothe
them and speak to them gently
and give them wholesome advice.

وَلَا تُؤْتُوا السُّفَهَاءَ أَمْوَالَكُمُ الَّتِي
جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ قِيَامًا وَارْزُقُوهُمْ
فِيهَا وَاكْسُوهُمْ وَقُولُوا لَهُمْ
قَوْلًا مَعْرُوفًا ﴿٥﴾

[6] Keep a watch on the
mental progress of the
orphans until they attain the

وَابْتَلُوا الْيَتَامَىٰ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغُوا
النِّكَاحَ فَإِنْ آنَسْتُمْ مِنْهُمْ رُشْدًا

age of marriage. When ye perceive in them signs of proper understanding, hand over their property to them; and do not expend it either wastefully or in haste lest they come of age. And let him who is above want abstain (from charging anything for his stewardship); but he who is needy, let him take of it what custom allows. Then, when you make over to them their property, call witnesses to the transfer in their presence; and God is sufficient in taking account.

فَادْفَعُوٓا إِلَيْهِمْ أَمْوَالَهُمْ ۚ وَلَا تَأْكُلُوهَآ إِسْرَافًا وَبِدَارًا أَن يَكْبَرُوا ۚ وَمَن كَانَ غَنِيًّا فَلْيَسْتَعْفِفْ ۖ وَمَن كَانَ فَقِيرًا فَلْيَأْكُلْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۚ فَإِذَا دَفَعْتُمْ إِلَيْهِمْ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فَأَشْهِدُوا عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ حَسِيبًا ﴿٦﴾

(1) Prior to the advent of Islam, the notion prevailed that daughters should have no share in the property of their parents. This notion is put an end to by the *Qur'ān* and the principle is announced that as heirs to the property of parents, daughters, even like sons, should have their due share.

(2) While distributing the property among the heirs of a deceased person, do not neglect to make some provision for even distant relations and particularly the orphans and the indigent among them. They may not have direct rights to the property of the deceased; but it is meet that they should also receive something.

(3) Those who misappropriate anything out of the property of the orphans should be prepared for condign chastisement on the day of judgment.

[7] Men have a share in what their parents or kindred

لِلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانِ

وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ وَلِلنِّسَاءِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدٰنِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ مِمَّا قَلَّ مِنْهُ أَوْ كَثُرَ نَصِيبًا مَّفْرُوضًا ٧

leave behind, and women also a share in what their parents and kindred leave, whether it be little or much, as a specific share.

وَإِذَا حَضَرَ الْقِسْمَةَ أُولُوا الْقُرْبٰى وَالْيَتٰمٰى وَالْمَسٰكِينُ فَارْزُقُوهُم مِّنْهُ وَقُولُوا لَهُمْ قَوْلًا مَّعْرُوفًا ٨

[8] And when at the division appear distant kinsfolk and orphans and those in want from among the family, make some provision for them also, and if that were not possible adequately, at least speak to them in a gentle manner, (for after all, they are an indigent people and it is desirable that one should deal tenderly with those depressed in circumstances.)

وَلْيَخْشَ الَّذِينَ لَوْ تَرَكُوا مِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّةً ضِعٰفًا خَافُوا عَلَيْهِمْ فَلْيَتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ وَلْيَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا ٩

[9] And let them (the regular heirs) realise in awe what they themselves would feel were they to leave their family behind in a helpless state. Let them fear God therefore and (grudge not a small provision for the poorer members of the family and the orphans and the needy and) speak to them the right word.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ أَمْوٰلَ الْيَتٰمٰى ظُلْمًا إِنَّمَا يَأْكُلُونَ فِي بُطُونِهِمْ نَارًا وَسَيَصْلَوْنَ سَعِيرًا ١٠

[10] Verily those who swallow unjustly the property of orphans, they only swallow down fire into their bellies and anon shall they be exposed to a blazing fire.

Section 2

This section deals with the subject of inheritance and its distribution.

[11] In respect of bequeathing to your children, God commandeth you to give the male the portion of two females, and if they be only females, two or more, they shall have together two thirds of what one hath left behind; but if only one, she shall have the half. And the father and mother of the deceased, shall each of them have a sixth part of the inheritance, if he have children; but if he have no child and his parents alone are left as his heirs, then his mother shall have the third and the father two thirds; and if he have brothers or sisters, his mother shall have the sixth.

The entire arrangement is valid only after paying the bequests which he had bequeathed and his debts. You know not which of them, your father or your children, are of greater benefit to you.

Their shares are definitely fixed by God.

Verily God knoweth (why He hath so decreed)—He, the Wise

يُوصِيكُمُ اللَّهُ فِي أَوْلَادِكُمْ لِلذَّكَرِ مِثْلُ حَظِّ الْأُنثَيَيْنِ ۚ فَإِن كُنَّ نِسَاءً فَوْقَ اثْنَتَيْنِ فَلَهُنَّ ثُلُثَا مَا تَرَكَ ۚ وَإِن كَانَتْ وَاحِدَةً فَلَهَا النِّصْفُ ۚ وَلِأَبَوَيْهِ لِكُلِّ وَاحِدٍ مِّنْهُمَا السُّدُسُ مِمَّا تَرَكَ إِن كَانَ لَهُ وَلَدٌ ۚ فَإِن لَّمْ يَكُن لَّهُ وَلَدٌ وَوَرِثَهُ أَبَوَاهُ فَلِأُمِّهِ الثُّلُثُ ۚ فَإِن كَانَ لَهُ إِخْوَةٌ فَلِأُمِّهِ السُّدُسُ مِن بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ يُوصِي بِهَا أَوْ دَيْنٍ ۗ آبَاؤُكُمْ وَأَبْنَاؤُكُمْ لَا تَدْرُونَ أَيُّهُمْ أَقْرَبُ لَكُمْ نَفْعًا ۚ فَرِيضَةً مِّنَ اللَّهِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ⑪

The position of the *Kalala* in respect of inheritance is explained. A *Kalala* is he or she who leaves behind neither parents nor children. The heirs of such a person may be of three categories:

(1) His own brothers and sisters, (2) His step-brothers and sisters being children of the same father but by a separate mother, (3) Step-brothers and sisters being children of the same mother by a husband other than his own father. It is this third category that is the subject of consideration in the following verse. The other two categories are referred to in the last verses of this chapter.

[12] And ye shall have the half of what your wives leave behind if they have no issue. But if they have any issue, then, you shall have the fourth of what they have left behind, after the payment of any bequests that they may have bequeathed and their debts.

And your wives shall have a fourth of what you leave if you have no issue, but if you have any issue, then they shall have an eighth of what you leave, after the payment of any bequests that you may have bequeathed and your debts.

And if the man or the woman who leaveth the heritage have neither parents living nor children but hath a brother or sister, either shall have a

وَلَكُمْ نِصْفُ مَا تَرَكَ أَزْوَاجُكُمْ
إِنْ لَّمْ يَكُنْ لَّهُنَّ وَلَدٌ ۚ فَإِنْ كَانَ
لَهُنَّ وَلَدٌ فَلَكُمُ الرُّبُعُ مِمَّا
تَرَكْنَ مِنْ بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ يُّوْصِيْنَ
بِهَآ أَوْ دَيْنٍ ۚ وَلَهُنَّ الرُّبُعُ مِمَّا
تَرَكْتُمْ إِنْ لَّمْ يَكُنْ لَّكُمْ وَلَدٌ ۚ
فَإِنْ كَانَ لَكُمْ وَلَدٌ فَلَهُنَّ
الثُّمُنُ مِمَّا تَرَكْتُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ
وَصِيَّةٍ تُوْصُوْنَ بِهَآ أَوْ دَيْنٍ ۗ
وَإِنْ كَانَ رَجُلٌ يُّوْرَثُ كَلٰلَةً
أَوِ امْرَأَةٌ وَّلَهٗٓ أَخٌ أَوْ أُخْتٌ
فَلِكُلِّ وَاحِدٍ مِّنْهُمَا السُّدُسُ ۚ
فَإِنْ كَانُوْٓا أَكْثَرَ مِنْ ذٰلِكَ
فَهُمْ شُرَكَآءُ فِي الثُّلُثِ مِنْ بَعْدِ

sixth, and if more than one, they shall have alike in a third, after the payment of any bequests that may have been bequeathed or of their debts, without loss to any one. This is the ordinance of God, and God is Knowing, Gracious.

وَصِيَّةٍ يُوصَىٰ بِهَآ أَوْ دَيْنٍ غَيْرَ مُضَآرٍّ ۚ وَصِيَّةً مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَلِيمٌ ﴿١٢﴾

[13] These are the bounds set by God. And whoso obeyeth God and His Apostle, him will God admit to gardens wherein streams flow, to abide therein. And that is a great achievement.

تِلْكَ حُدُودُ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَمَن يُطِعِ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ يُدْخِلْهُ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا ۚ وَذَٰلِكَ ٱلْفَوْزُ ٱلْعَظِيمُ ﴿١٣﴾

[14] And whoso shall disobey God and His Apostles, and transgress His bounds, him will God admit to the Fire to abide therein; and for him shall be a shameful chastisement.

وَمَن يَعْصِ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ وَيَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَهُۥ يُدْخِلْهُ نَارًا خَٰلِدًا فِيهَا وَلَهُۥ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ ﴿١٤﴾ ع

Section 3

Punishment for moral laxity.

[15] If any of your women be accused of immorality, then call for four witnesses against them from among yourselves, then, if they bear witness, restrict their movements by confining them to their houses for their life or until God opens out a way for them.

وَٱلَّٰتِى يَأْتِينَ ٱلْفَٰحِشَةَ مِن نِّسَآئِكُمْ فَٱسْتَشْهِدُوا۟ عَلَيْهِنَّ أَرْبَعَةً مِّنكُمْ ۖ فَإِن شَهِدُوا۟ فَأَمْسِكُوهُنَّ فِى ٱلْبُيُوتِ حَتَّىٰ يَتَوَفَّىٰهُنَّ ٱلْمَوْتُ أَوْ يَجْعَلَ ٱللَّهُ لَهُنَّ سَبِيلًا ﴿١٥﴾

[16] And if the two are

وَٱلَّذَانِ يَأْتِيَٰنِهَا مِنكُمْ فَـَٔاذُوهُمَا ۖ فَإِن

from among you who are found guilty, then, subject them to duress, but if they repent and amend, then leave them alone. Verily God is Relenting, Merciful.

تابا واصلحا فاعرضوا عنهما ۚ
إن الله كان توابا رحيما ﴿١٦﴾

Repentance may be regarded as sincere only when the repentant does not repeat the offence and feels ashamed at heart of what he or she hath done.

[17] God accepts the repentance of only those who do evil from ignorance and thereafter speedily repent. To these God turneth in mercy, and God knoweth (why He turneth), the Wise!

إنما التوبة على الله للذين يعملون
السوء بجهالة ثم يتوبون من
قريب فأولئك يتوب الله عليهم ۚ
وكان الله عليما حكيما ﴿١٧﴾

[18] But repentance o those is of no avail who persist in evil till death stareth any one of them in the face and he says: "Now do I verily repent"; nor of those who die in the state of unbelief. For these have We assigned a painful chastisement.

وليست التوبة للذين يعملون
السيئات ۚ حتى إذا حضر أحدهم
الموت قال إني تبت الآن
ولا الذين يموتون وهم كفار ۚ
أولئك أعتدنا لهم عذابا أليما ﴿١٨﴾

Of the various injustices to which the womenfolk among the Arabs of pre-Islamic days were subjected, one was the practice of inheriting the wives of the deceased, as if they were items of property left behind. Besides this, the widows were forced to forsake their dower and even hand over to the male heirs whatever property they had in their possession. The *Qur'ān* puts an end to all such injustices.

Relations with women, points out the *Qur'ān*, should rest on justice and fair play and not merely on sex attraction, so that the male might not with ease discard one woman and take another. Licence of this type never gives rise to or sustains a happy social order. Should a woman, states the *Qurān*, displease you at times, try to bear with her. It is quite possible that the thing you do not like in her may in fact bode good to you.

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا يَحِلُّ
لَكُمْ اَنْ تَرِثُوا النِّسَآءَ كَرْهًا ؕ
وَلَا تَعْضُلُوْهُنَّ لِتَذْهَبُوْا بِبَعْضِ
مَآ اٰتَيْتُمُوْهُنَّ اِلَّآ اَنْ يَّاْتِيْنَ
بِفَاحِشَةٍ مُّبَيِّنَةٍ ۚ وَعَاشِرُوْهُنَّ
بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ ۚ فَاِنْ كَرِهْتُمُوْهُنَّ فَعَسٰٓى
اَنْ تَكْرَهُوْا شَيْئًا وَّيَجْعَلَ اللّٰهُ فِيْهِ
خَيْرًا كَثِيْرًا ﴿١٩﴾

[19] O ye who believe! It is not lawful for you to forcibly appropriate women as part of heritage, nor should you subject them to duress with a view to taking away from them part of what you have given away to them, unless they are guilty of open immorality, and live with them in appropriate manner. If ye dislike them in any manner, may be you have disliked that in which God hath placed abundant good for you.

وَاِنْ اَرَدْتُّمُ اسْتِبْدَالَ زَوْجٍ مَّكَانَ
زَوْجٍ ۙ وَّاٰتَيْتُمْ اِحْدٰىهُنَّ قِنْطَارًا فَلَا
تَاْخُذُوْا مِنْهُ شَيْئًا ؕ اَتَاْخُذُوْنَهٗ بُهْتَانًا
وَّاِثْمًا مُّبِيْنًا ﴿٢٠﴾

[20] If you wish to dispense with a wife for the sake of another, and if you have given her even a talent of gold, do not take back aught of it. Would you have it by slandering her or charging her with an open sin?

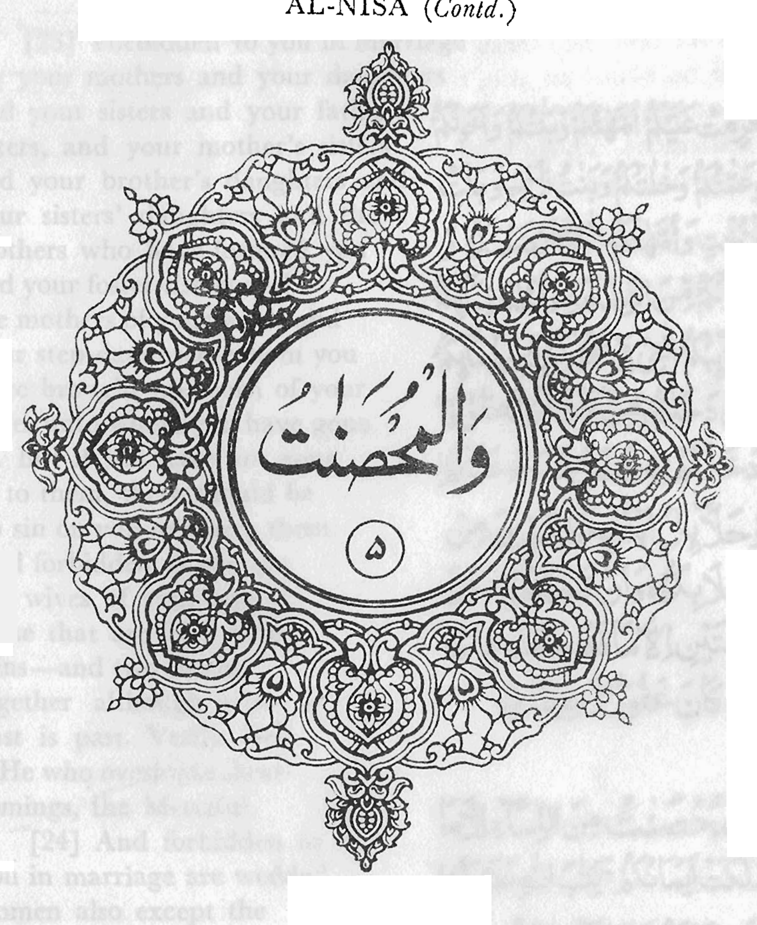
وَكَيْفَ تَاْخُذُوْنَهٗ وَقَدْ اَفْضٰى بَعْضُكُمْ
اِلٰى بَعْضٍ وَّاَخَذْنَ مِنْكُمْ مِّيْثَاقًا غَلِيْظًا ﴿٢١﴾

[21] And how can you take it away when one of you has gone into the other and a solemn binding hath been taken from you.

Part V

Chapter IV

AL-NISA (*Contd.*)



[22] And marry not women whom your fathers had married, though what is past is past, for, this is a shameful and hateful and an evil way.

وَلَا تَنكِحُوا مَا نَكَحَ آبَاؤُكُم مِّنَ النِّسَاءِ
إِلَّا مَا قَدْ سَلَفَ ۚ إِنَّهُ كَانَ فَاحِشَةً
وَمَقْتًا وَسَاءَ سَبِيلًا ﴿٢٢﴾

SECTION 4

The Women with whom marriage is prohibited.

[23] Forbidden to you in marriage are your mothers and your daughters and your sisters and your father's sisters, and your mother's sisters and your brother's daughters and your sisters' daughters and the mothers who have fostered you and your foster-sisters and the mothers of your wives and your step-daughters whom you have brought up, born of your wives unto whom you have gone in. But if you have not gone in to them, there should be no sin on you to marry them. And forbidden to you are the wives of your sons—those that are from your loins—and two sisters together although what is past is past. Verily God is He who overlooks shortcomings, the Merciful.

حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمْ أُمَّهَاتُكُمْ وَبَنَاتُكُمْ وَأَخَوَاتُكُمْ
وَعَمَّاتُكُمْ وَخَالَاتُكُمْ وَبَنَاتُ الْأَخِ وَبَنَاتُ
الْأُخْتِ وَأُمَّهَاتُكُمُ اللَّاتِي أَرْضَعْنَكُمْ وَ
أَخَوَاتُكُم مِّنَ الرَّضَاعَةِ وَأُمَّهَاتُ نِسَائِكُمْ
وَرَبَائِبُكُمُ اللَّاتِي فِي حُجُورِكُم مِّن نِّسَائِكُمُ
اللَّاتِي دَخَلْتُم بِهِنَّ فَإِن لَّمْ تَكُونُوا
دَخَلْتُم بِهِنَّ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ
وَحَلَائِلُ أَبْنَائِكُمُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ
أَصْلَابِكُمْ وَأَن تَجْمَعُوا بَيْنَ
الْأُخْتَيْنِ إِلَّا مَا قَدْ سَلَفَ ۗ إِنَّ
اللَّهَ كَانَ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا ﴿٢٣﴾

[24] And forbidden to you in marriage are wedded women also except the captives. This is God's

وَالْمُحْصَنَاتُ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ إِلَّا مَا
مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ ۖ كِتَابَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ ۚ
وَأُحِلَّ لَكُم مَّا وَرَاءَ ذَٰلِكُمْ أَن

ordinance to you. But all the rest are lawful to you in marriage provided you seek them in wedlock by your paying the dower and not to satisfy mere lust. But to those of them whom you have gone in, give their dowers. This is the law. But there shall be no blame on you, if you mutually agree to alter the settlement. Verily God is the Knowing, the Wise.

تَبْتَغُوا بِأَمْوَالِكُم مُّحْصِنِينَ غَيْرَ
مُسَافِحِينَ فَمَا اسْتَمْتَعْتُم بِهِ
مِنْهُنَّ فَآتُوهُنَّ أُجُورَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً
وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيمَا تَرَاضَيْتُم
بِهِ مِن بَعْدِ الْفَرِيضَةِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿٢٣﴾

CHAPTER IV

AL-NISA (*Contd.*)

Do not look down upon the women who are your captives simply because they do not belong to your community or are prisoners of war. You may marry any of those among them who have accepted your faith.

Slavery prevailed in almost every country at the time of the advent of Islam. The strong used to make slaves of the weak and treat them barbarously. As a step of reform in their condition, the *Qur'ān* effected improvement in two directions:

In the first place, the practice was confined to war captives. Facility was however provided for their redemption by allowing them the privilege of paying ranson, and also by calling on the faithful to free a slave as an act of expiation for even the smallest sin committed. In the second place, the *Qur'ān* accorded to the captives a series of privileges which in practice amounted to the grant of full citizenship. It is in pursuance of this movement of reform that the Muslims are induced in the following passage to marry captive women by observing that the captive and the free were but members of the human family and that the only criterion of superiority of one over the other was faith in God and righteous living.

[25] But whoever of you cannot afford the wherewithal to wed free, believing women, then (let him marry) such of the believing women as are your captives; for, God knoweth best your sincerities. After all, both of you are of the same human family. So marry them with the leave of their custodians and give them their dower accor-

وَمَنْ لَّمْ يَسْتَطِعْ مِنْكُمْ طَوْلًا اَنْ
يَّنْكِحَ الْمُحْصَنٰتِ الْمُؤْمِنٰتِ فَمِنْ
مَّا مَلَكَتْ اَيْمَانُكُمْ مِّنْ فَتَيٰتِكُمُ
الْمُؤْمِنٰتِ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ اَعْلَمُ بِاِيْمَانِكُمْ ؕ
بَعْضُكُمْ مِّنْ بَعْضٍ ۚ فَانْكِحُوْهُنَّ

ding to custom. Only see to it that they are chaste women, not debauched, nor given to secret amours. But if after they have entered into wedlock, they commit adultery, their penalty is half of that prescribed for free married women. This (permission to marry captive women) is for those of you who otherwise fear to fall into sin (by remaining unmarried). But it is much better for you to practice continence (till things get easy for you); and God is Forgiving, Merciful.

بِإِذْنِ أَهْلِهِنَّ وَآتُوهُنَّ أُجُورَهُنَّ
بِالْمَعْرُوفِ مُحْصَنَٰتٍ غَيْرَ مُسَٰفِحَٰتٍ
وَلَا مُتَّخِذَٰتِ أَخْدَانٍ ۚ فَإِذَآ أُحْصِنَّ
فَإِنْ أَتَيْنَ بِفَٰحِشَةٍ فَعَلَيْهِنَّ نِصْفُ
مَا عَلَى الْمُحْصَنَٰتِ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ ۚ
ذَٰلِكَ لِمَنْ خَشِيَ الْعَنَتَ مِنكُمْ ۚ وَأَن
تَصْبِرُوا خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٢٥﴾

Section 5

The regulations prescribed in the passage following aim:

(1) to open out for man the path of life which the righteous had followed hitherto;

(2) to free social life of undue hardship or meaningless rigidity;

(3) to develop in man repentance for his sins and rid him of all unwholesome social evils and

(4) to help him cultivate the sense of restraint in the pursuit of his desires.

Having drawn attention to the regulations mentioned here, the *Qur'ān* observes that social welfare of any society is not attained unless every member thereof is fair and honest towards every other. So, the injunction is issued that none should misappropriate the property of another. On the other hand, they may pool their resources for purposes of joint trade and distribute among themselves in an equitable manner the proceeds accruing.

As a rider, it is pointed out that if a person abstains from

major sins, the law of mercy absolves him of petty foibles and equips him for a good life.

[26] God desireth to make this clear to you, and directs you to the ways of those who have been before you, and desireth to be indulgent towards you, and God knoweth (why He so desireth), the Wise.

يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُبَيِّنَ لَكُمْ وَيَهْدِيَكُمْ
سُنَنَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ وَيَتُوبَ
عَلَيْكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٢٦﴾

[27] God desireth to be indulgent towards you, but they who follow their lusts would have you drift a long way off the right track.

وَاللَّهُ يُرِيدُ أَن يَتُوبَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَ
يُرِيدُ الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ الشَّهَوَاتِ
أَن تَمِيلُوا مَيْلًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٢٧﴾

[28] God desireth to lighten your burden, for, man is born weak.

يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَن يُخَفِّفَ عَنكُمْ ۚ وَ
خُلِقَ الْإِنسَانُ ضَعِيفًا ﴿٢٨﴾

[29] O ye who believe! Do not use your property wastefully on each other but put it together into trade for mutual benefit, and yet suppress not your (lawful) desires. Verily God hath been very merciful to you.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَكُم
بَيْنَكُم بِالْبَاطِلِ إِلَّا أَن تَكُونَ
تِجَارَةً عَن تَرَاضٍ مِّنكُمْ ۚ وَلَا
تَقْتُلُوا أَنفُسَكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُمْ رَحِيمًا ﴿٢٩﴾

[30] And whoever shall do this (or waste each others property) maliciously and wrongfully, We will consign him to fire, and this is easy for God.

وَمَن يَفْعَلْ ذَٰلِكَ عُدْوَانًا وَظُلْمًا فَسَوْفَ
نُصْلِيهِ نَارًا ۚ وَكَانَ ذَٰلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرًا ﴿٣٠﴾

[31] Should you then avoid the great sins which ye are forbidden, We will blot out your faults and will accord you an honourable station (in life).

إِن تَجْتَنِبُوا كَبَائِرَ مَا تُنْهَوْنَ عَنْهُ
نُكَفِّرْ عَنكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَنُدْخِلْكُم مُّدْخَلًا كَرِيمًا ﴿٣١﴾

[32] And covet not that of which God hath given to some more than to some others. Men shall have what they have earned and women shall have what they have earned, and ask of God his bounty. Verily God hath knowledge of all things.

وَلَا تَتَمَنَّوْا مَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بِهِ بَعْضَكُمْ
عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ ۚ لِّلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا
اكْتَسَبُوا ۖ وَلِلنِّسَاءِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا
اكْتَسَبْنَ ۚ وَاسْأَلُوا اللَّهَ مِن فَضْلِهِ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا ﴿٣٢﴾

[33] In the interest of every one, We have appointed heirs to property left behind by parents and relations. And to them also to whom you have given your word, make over their share. Verily God witnesseth all things.

وَلِكُلٍّ جَعَلْنَا مَوَالِيَ مِمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ ۚ وَالَّذِينَ عَقَدَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ فَآتُوهُمْ نَصِيبَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدًا ﴿٣٣﴾

Section 6

Before the advent of the *Qur'ān*, the notion universally prevailed that the perfection of human personality was possible for man alone. A woman was supposed to possess no individuality of her own. She was moulded into being just to serve as an instrument of satisfaction for man and devote herself to his service.

The *Qur'ān* took the lead in opposing this age-long notion. It proclaimed that the human species is composed of the male and female, and that each of the two has distinct individuality, with distinct duties to perform in spheres appropriate to each. The one is as essential to human activity as the other. The two complement each other to fulfil the demands of a perfect society.

Of course the male and the female species are each distinguished by qualities peculiar to each. The male is very often the means of the fulfilment of the needs of the female, particularly so in the field of material living. That is why man is normally called upon to look after the material well-being of the woman. The women-folk should not on that account feel humiliated and rue over the fact that they were not born as men so that they might discharge the functions discharged by men. The *Qur'ān* assures them that even as for men the avenues of distinction in the field of knowledge and goodness are open to them. The good or righteous women are they who look after their husbands and protect their interests in and out of their presence.

Should a woman disregard any privilege of her husband

and turn truant, then it behoves the husband to bring her round by persuasion and even pressure. On the other hand, should a rift be feared between the two, the right course is to assemble the elders related to both to effect an amicable settlement of their differences.

[34] Men rank a little higher than women on account of the qualities with which God hath gifted them and on account of what they spend (for women) from their substance. The virtuous women, therefore, are dutiful, carefully protecting in their (husband's) absence what God would have them protect. As for those women who seem to have gone refractory, (first) admonish them (and then, if necessary) remove them to separate beds, and (if that fails) give them a shaking. But if they return to obedience, seek no occasion against them. (Remember) God is vastly High in authority.

اَلرِّجَالُ قَوّٰامُوْنَ عَلَى النِّسَآءِ بِمَا
فَضَّلَ اللّٰهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلٰى بَعْضٍ وَّ
بِمَآ اَنْفَقُوْا مِنْ اَمْوَالِهِمْ ۚ فَالصّٰلِحٰتُ
قٰنِتٰتٌ حٰفِظٰتٌ لِّلْغَيْبِ بِمَا حَفِظَ
اللّٰهُ ۚ وَالّٰتِىْ تَخَافُوْنَ نُشُوْزَهُنَّ
فَعِظُوْهُنَّ وَاهْجُرُوْهُنَّ فِى
الْمَضَاجِعِ وَاضْرِبُوْهُنَّ ۚ فَاِنْ
اَطَعْنَكُمْ فَلَا تَبْغُوْا عَلَيْهِنَّ
سَبِيْلًا ۗ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ عَلِيًّا
كَبِيْرًا ﴿٣٤﴾

[35] If you fear a breach between the couple, then appoint an arbiter from the man's family and an arbiter from the woman's family. If the two (man and wife) desire to reach a settlement, God will effect a reconciliation between them. And assuredly God is knowing, the Apprised of all.

وَاِنْ خِفْتُمْ شِقَاقَ بَيْنِهِمَا فَابْعَثُوْا
حَكَمًا مِّنْ اَهْلِهٖ وَحَكَمًا مِّنْ
اَهْلِهَا ۚ اِنْ يُّرِيْدَآ اِصْلَاحًا
يُّوَفِّقِ اللّٰهُ بَيْنَهُمَا ۗ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ عَلِيْمًا خَبِيْرًا ﴿٣٥﴾

Here is a general direction in respect of fulfilling mutual obligations to society.

[36] Serve ye God, and join not aught with Him. And be good to parents, and kinsfolk, and to orphans, and to the needy and to the neighbour who is of

وَاعْبُدُوا اللّٰهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوْا بِهٖ
شَيْـًٔا وَّبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ اِحْسَانًا وَّبِذِى
الْقُرْبٰى وَالْيَتٰمٰى وَالْمَسٰكِيْنِ وَ

kin and to the neighbour who is not of kin, and to the fellow-traveller and to the way-farer, and to those under your care and control (the slaves and the dumb animals). Verily God loveth not the proud, the boastful,

الجار ذي القربى والجار الجنب
والصاحب بالجنب وابن السبيل
وما ملكت أيمانكم إن الله
لا يحب من كان مختالا فخورا ﴿٣٦﴾

[37] Who, themselves, being niggardly bid others to be niggardly and abstain from disclosing what God of His bounty hath given them—for the ungrateful have We prepared a humiliating chastisement—

الذين يبخلون ويأمرون الناس
بالبخل ويكتمون ما آتاهم الله
من فضله وأعتدنا
للكفرين عذابا مهينا ﴿٣٧﴾

[38] And who make a show of what they give away of their substance in charity and who believe not in God and the Last Day. And he who hath taken Satan for a companion hath indeed taken for himself very bad companion!

والذين ينفقون أموالهم
رئاء الناس ولا يؤمنون
بالله ولا باليوم الآخر ومن يكن
الشيطن له قرينا فساء قرينا ﴿٣٨﴾

[39] What would they have lost, had they believed in God and in the Last Day, and given to others in charity out of what God had given them? And full well doth God know them.

وماذا عليهم لو آمنوا بالله واليوم
الآخر وأنفقوا مما رزقهم الله
وكان الله بهم عليما ﴿٣٩﴾

[40] God truly will not dispoil any one even by a particle, and if there be any good done, he will requite it two-fold, and of His own accord will He bestow a great reward.

إن الله لا يظلم مثقال ذرة و
إن تك حسنة يضعفها ويؤت
من لدنه أجرا عظيما ﴿٤٠﴾

[41] O Prophet! What will be the situation then when We shall call out a witness from every people (viz. the Prophets raised among them) to bear witness against the unbelievers among them, and call thee also to bear witness against them all?

فكيف إذا جئنا من كل أمة بشهيد
وجئنا بك على هؤلاء شهيدا ﴿٤١﴾

وقف النبي عليه السلام

[42] That day shall those who believed not and rebelled against the Apostle wish that they were levelled with the earth. But nothing shall they hide from God.

يَوْمَئِذٍ يَوَدُّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَعَصَوُا الرَّسُولَ لَوْ تُسَوَّىٰ بِهِمُ الْأَرْضُ وَلَا يَكْتُمُونَ اللَّهَ حَدِيثًا ﴿٤٢﴾

SECTION 7

Should you care to fulfil aright your social responsibilities, it is necessary for you to strengthen your conscience by constant remembrance of God. A people who cannot appreciate the significance of prayer and do not develop sincere devotion to God, never shall be able to overcome the temptations of life.

At the time of the advent of Islam, the Arabs were addicted to wine and it was not possible for them to give it up suddenly. Hence prohibition was resorted to only gradually. As a first step in this direction, the Muslims were asked not to come to the place of prayer in a drunken state.

In order to participate in prayer, the Muslims had to be physically clean. Permission was given, wherever water was not available immediately either for ablution or bodily wash, to use clean earth to wipe out from the body all signs of uncleanness. The idea was that in no circumstance should one find an excuse for avoiding prayer.

[43] O ye who believe! Come not to prayer in a drunken state until you know what you utter; nor when you have had a seminal discharge, except ye be wayfaring, until you have had a bath. But if ye be sick or on a journey or ye have come from the privy or have touched a woman,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقْرَبُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنْتُمْ سُكَارَىٰ حَتَّىٰ تَعْلَمُوا مَا تَقُولُونَ وَلَا جُنُبًا إِلَّا عَابِرِي سَبِيلٍ حَتَّىٰ تَغْتَسِلُوا ۚ وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مَرْضَىٰ أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ أَوْ جَاءَ أَحَدٌ مِنْكُمْ مِنَ الْغَائِطِ أَوْ لَامَسْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ

فَلَمْ تَجِدُوا مَاءً فَتَيَمَّمُوا صَعِيدًا طَيِّبًا فَامْسَحُوا بِوُجُوهِكُمْ وَأَيْدِيكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَفُوًّا غَفُورًا ﴿٤٣﴾

and ye find not water, then seek clean earth and wipe with it your faces and your hands (to make yourselves fit for prayer). Truly God, is lenient, Forgiving!

The Muslims are told here that directions touching one's conduct in life are given to them even as had been given to the people of the Book previously. But the people of the Book neglected them and suffered in consequence. The Muslims therefore should take a lesson from their history and sincerely abide by the directions given to them if they wish to prosper in life.

The Jews of Medina, for instance, when greeting the Muslims or even the Prophet himself used to do it in such a manner that, though apparently respectful, it was suggestive of ill-will. The *Qur'ān* calls upon the Jews to desist from their opposition to the call of Truth and warns them that unless they made amends betimes, this opposition will have a miserable end, since the call of Truth is bound to triumph in the end, as it really happened in due course.

In the previous chapter, it has been pointed out that the serious error into which the Jews and the Christians had fallen was that they had come to pay so high a regard for their religious leaders that they endowed them with powers and privileges usually attributed only to God.

The outcome of this error was this: the function of guidance in religious matters which was exclusive to the Book of God, now came to be assumed by professional priests whose objective was to profit by the ignorance of the masses or of those who were incapable of thinking out things for themselves and who, one and all, were steeped in superstition and had blocked for themselves all openings for light and knowledge.

The *Qur'ān* calls this usurpation by the professional priests of the privileges peculiar to the Book of God as *shirk* or assign-

ing to man divine attributes and privileges. The *Qur'ān* tells the Jews that this is a sin unforgivable, for it operates directly against the order of life prescribed for man and disturbs its very foundations.

The Jews set great store by their religious exclusiveness, so much so, that in their arrogance, they fancied that as children of Israel they were the chosen people of God and that salvation was meant only for them. Faith and righteous living had lost their value for them.

[44] Hast thou not marked those who having knowledge only of a part of the Book, purchase error and desire you to go off the right track?

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا نَصِيبًا مِّنَ الْكِتٰبِ يَشْتَرُونَ الضَّلٰلَةَ وَيُرِيدُونَ أَن تَضِلُّوا السَّبِيلَ ﴿٤٤﴾

[45] God knoweth full well who your enemies are and God is sufficient unto you as a guardian and sufficient unto you as a helper.

وَاللّٰهُ أَعْلَمُ بِأَعْدَآئِكُمْ ۚ وَكَفٰى بِاللّٰهِ وَلِيًّا ۙ وَّكَفٰى بِاللّٰهِ نَصِيرًا ﴿٤٥﴾

[46] Of the Jews there are some who take words out of their context and say (for instance): "*Sama'na*" and "*Asaina*", "We have heard and we have not obeyed," and also say: "*Isma ghaira Musma'in*" and "*Rai'na*"—"Hear thou but as one who heareth not and look at us," twisting their tongues and scoffing at the Faith. How well would it have been and more befitting for them if they had

مِنَ الَّذِينَ هَادُوا يُحَرِّفُونَ الْكَلِمَ عَن مَّوَاضِعِهِ وَيَقُولُونَ سَمِعْنَا وَعَصَيْنَا وَاسْمَعْ غَيْرَ مُسْمَعٍ وَّرَاعِنَا لَيًّا بِأَلْسِنَتِهِمْ وَطَعْنًا فِي الدِّينِ ۚ وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا وَاسْمَعْ

said "*Sama'na*" and "*At'ana*",
"We have heard and we have
obeyed," and had also:
"*Isma*" and "*unzurna*"—
"Hear and regard us."
But God hath cast them
away for their want of
faith. It is why only
a few of them are believers.

وَانْظُرْنَا لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ وَأَقْوَمَ
وَلَٰكِنْ لَّعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِكُفْرِهِمْ فَلَا
يُؤْمِنُونَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿٤٦﴾

[47] O ye to whom the
Scripture hath been given!
Believe in what We now have
sent down confirming that
which is already with you.
Are We to make you lose face
and turn you back into
exile once again or cast
you away as We had cast
away the sabbath breakers.
And what God wished came to pass.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَٰبَ ءَامِنُوا بِمَا
نَزَّلْنَا مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا مَعَكُم مِّن قَبْلِ
أَن نَّطْمِسَ وُجُوهًا فَنَرُدَّهَا عَلَىٰٓ
أَدْبَارِهَآ أَوْ نَلْعَنَهُمْ كَمَا لَعَنَّآ أَصْحَٰبَ
السَّبْتِ وَكَانَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ مَفْعُولًا ﴿٤٧﴾

[48] Surely God forgiveth
not the setting up of peers
for Him; for anything less
than this, He forgiveth whom-
soever He pleaseth. And he who
hath set up any peer for
God, he hath indeed coined
a grevious calumny.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَن يُشْرَكَ بِهِۦ وَيَغْفِرُ
مَا دُونَ ذَٰلِكَ لِمَن يَشَآءُ وَمَن
يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدِ افْتَرَىٰٓ إِثْمًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٤٨﴾

[49] Hast thou not marked
those who hold themselves to
be pure in mind? But God
purifieth whom He will,
and these shall not be given
the smallest inconvenience

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ يُزَكُّونَ أَنفُسَهُم
بَلِ اللَّهُ يُزَكِّى مَن يَشَآءُ وَلَا
يُظْلَمُونَ فَتِيلًا ﴿٤٩﴾

[50] See, how they invent
lies about God and this in
itself is a manifest sin!

انظُرْ كَيْفَ يَفْتَرُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ
وَكَفَىٰ بِهِۦٓ إِثْمًا مُّبِينًا ﴿٥٠﴾ ع

Section 8

When men discard the path of truth and take to what may be called 'groupism', they are unable to distinguish between right and wrong, or between truth and untruth. Their one obsession is to run down those who differ from them. In the pursuit of this obsession they do not hesitate to go against even their professed principles. Such was the line of action followed by the Jews of Madina. In the course of their history, they always remonstrated against idolatry and looked down upon idolaters. But when it came to opposing the Muslims, who themselves hated idolatry, the Jews, in their hatred for the Muslims praised the ways of the idolaters and proclaimed that even their ways were better than those of the Muslims.

[51] O Prophet! Hast thou not marked those who, having knowledge only of a part of the Scripture, believe in *Jibth* and *Taghut*, and say of those who disbelieve, "These are guided in a path better than that of the believers?"

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا نَصِيبًا مِّنَ الْكِتَٰبِ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْجِبْتِ وَالطَّٰغُوتِ وَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ أَهْدَىٰ مِنَ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا سَبِيلًا ﴿٥١﴾

[52] These are they whom God hath cast away, and for those whom God hath cast away, none shall find a helper.

أُولَٰٓئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ ۖ وَمَن يَلْعَنِ اللَّهُ فَلَن تَجِدَ لَهُۥ نَصِيرًا ﴿٥٢﴾

[53] Shall these who are so lost to the sense of Justice, have any share in the governance of the state? Were that done, they will certainly not give to their fellowmen even the speck of a date-stone.

أَمْ لَهُمْ نَصِيبٌ مِّنَ الْمُلْكِ فَإِذًا لَّا يُؤْتُونَ النَّاسَ نَقِيرًا

[54] Or do they envy those of the people whom God hath given of His bounty? Let them

أَمْ يَحْسُدُونَ النَّاسَ عَلَىٰ مَآ ءَاتَىٰهُمُ اللَّهُ مِن فَضْلِهِۦ ۖ فَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَآ ءَالَ

bear in mind that) We had given the children of Abraham not only the Book and wisdom but had given them a grand state (as well).

إِبْرٰهِيْمَ الْكِتٰبَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَاٰتَيْنٰهُمْ مُّلْكًا عَظِيْمًا ﴿٥٤﴾

[55] Some of them believed in him (the Prophet) and some of them turned aside from him. Sufficing is the burning fire of Hell.

فَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ اٰمَنَ بِهٖ وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ صَدَّ عَنْهُ ط وَكَفٰى بِجَهَنَّمَ سَعِيْرًا ﴿٥٥﴾

[56] As for those who discredit Our signs, We shall soon cast them into fire: so often as their skins shall be burnt out we shall substitute fresh skins so that they may go on tasting the torment. Verily God is Mighty, Wise.

اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا بِاٰيٰتِنَا سَوْفَ نُصْلِيْهِمْ نَارًا ط كُلَّمَا نَضِجَتْ جُلُوْدُهُمْ بَدَّلْنٰهُمْ جُلُوْدًا غَيْرَهَا لِيَذُوْقُوا الْعَذَابَ ط اِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ عَزِيْزًا حَكِيْمًا ﴿٥٦﴾

[57] But as for those who believe and do good deeds, We shall soon admit them to the Garden in which streams flow, to abide therein forever. Therein they shall have mates of stainless purity and We will keep them under the cooling shades (of Our Mercy).

وَالَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ سَنُدْخِلُهُمْ جَنّٰتٍ تَجْرِيْ مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْاَنْهٰرُ خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهَآ اَبَدًا ط لَهُمْ فِيْهَآ اَزْوَاجٌ مُّطَهَّرَةٌ ز وَّنُدْخِلُهُمْ ظِلًّا ظَلِيْلًا ﴿٥٧﴾

Having drawn attention to the errors into which the people of the Book had fallen, the *Qur'ān* turns to the Muslims and exhorts them to establish justice in their midst and follow honest ways of living so as to remove all obstacles to a peaceful existence.

(1) The basis of a happy organised society is the conceding to each individual every right to which he is entitled

Whoever the person or whatever the thing involved and whatever the situation, one must have the freedom to enjoy what legitimately belongs to him or to which he is entitled.

(2) Give a just decision when you have to judge between the claims of contending parties and never deviate from justice under any circumstances.

(3) The basic principle of religion is that one should obey God and His Prophet and also those who are entrusted with authority and that one should refer any issue over which differences arise to the commandments of God and to the regulations laid down by the Prophet and to submit to the decision reached in accordance there with.

The idea underlying this instruction is to settle all differences by a reference to the *Qur'ān* and the example of the Prophet and not to the shifting views and opinions of mere men.

Had the Muslims acted upon this direction of the *Qur'ān*, they would have saved themselves the travail of internal religious rifts which marked the course of their history and divided them into rival sects and groups.

Details of this phenomenon will be furnished in the subsequent chapters of the *Qur'ān*.

[58] God doth enjoin you to restore trusts to their owners, and when ye judge between men, to judge with fairness. Excellent is the advice to which God exhorteth you. God heareth what you speak and beholdeth what you do.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمٰنٰتِ إِلَىٰٓ أَهْلِهَا ۙ وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَنْ تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ نِعِمَّا يَعِظُكُمْ بِهِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا ﴿٥٨﴾

[59] O ye who believe! Obey God and obey the Apostle and those of you invested

يٰٓأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ اٰمَنُوٓا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ ۖ فَإِنْ

with authorty. And if in anything you differ, refer it to God and the Apostle, and abide by their decision if you truly believe in God and the Last Day. This is the best and the fairest way to reach a settlement.

تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَ
الرَّسُولِ إِن كُنتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ
الْآخِرِ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا ٥٩

SECTION 9

[60] Hast thou not marked those who avow that they believe in what hath been sent down to thee and in what hath been sent down before thee? Yet they would fain go to *Taghut* (or to a mischief-maker) for judgement, though they have been commanded not to believe in him; and fain would Satan wish them to drift (from the right path).

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ يَزْعُمُونَ أَنَّهُمْ
آمَنُوا بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ
مِن قَبْلِكَ يُرِيدُونَ أَن يَتَحَاكَمُوا
إِلَى الطَّاغُوتِ وَقَدْ أُمِرُوا أَن
يَكْفُرُوا بِهِ وَيُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَن
يُضِلَّهُمْ ضَلَالًا بَعِيدًا ٦٠

The hypocrites claim to profess the Faith, but their activities belie it. For example, they go to the detractors of Islam for a settlement of their disputes instead of to the Prophet or to the Faithful, and whenever they are caught and questioned about their duplicity, they swear before the Prophet that in truth they follow only the orders of the Prophet but that they had gone to the opponents of Islam just to appease them. It is to this behaviour that the *Qur'ān* refers in the following verse and makes it clear that those who do not believe in the orders and the decisions of the Prophet are not actual believers. It is not enough to say: "We acknowledge your orders". On the other hand, they should not in the least be vexed over what the Prophet hath decided and should accept it in willing submission.

[61] And O Prophet! when it is said to them: "Turn to what God hath sent down and to the Apostle," thou wilt notice that the hypocrites purposely avoid thee.

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا إِلَىٰ مَا أَنزَلَ
اللَّهُ وَإِلَى الرَّسُولِ رَأَيْتَ الْمُنَافِقِينَ
يَصُدُّونَ عَنكَ صُدُودًا ﴿٦١﴾

[62] And now mark what they do when some misfortune befalleth them as a result of what their hands have wrought? They then come to thee swearing by God (saying) "We meant nothing but goodwill and concord."

فَكَيْفَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُم مُّصِيبَةٌ بِمَا
قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ ثُمَّ جَاءُوكَ
يَحْلِفُونَ بِاللَّهِ إِنْ أَرَدْنَا إِلَّا إِحْسَانًا
وَتَوْفِيقًا ﴿٦٢﴾

[63] These are they, the inner workings of whose hearts God perfectly knoweth. Therefore keep clear of them and warn them and speak to them for their own good in appealing terms.

أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُ اللَّهُ مَا فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ
فَأَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ وَعِظْهُمْ وَقُل
لَّهُمْ فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ قَوْلًا بَلِيغًا ﴿٦٣﴾

[64] We never sent an apostle except to be followed even as God desired. But had they, having sinned against themselves, turned to thee and begged forgiveness of God and had the Apostle invoked forgiveness for them, they would have certainly found God relenting towards them, Merciful as He is!

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِن رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا لِيُطَاعَ
بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ إِذ ظَّلَمُوا
أَنفُسَهُمْ جَاءُوكَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا اللَّهَ
وَاسْتَغْفَرَ لَهُمُ الرَّسُولُ لَوَجَدُوا
اللَّهَ تَوَّابًا رَّحِيمًا ﴿٦٤﴾

[65] Beware! By thy Lord! they shall not be taken for believers until they set thee up as a judge in matters wherein

فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّىٰ يُحَكِّمُوكَ
فِيمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا فِي

they differ and thereafter find not the least vexation in their hearts over what thou hast decided and, accept it in willing submission.

أنفسهم حرجا مما قضيت ويسلموا تسليما ﴿٦٥﴾

[66] Had we ordered them: "Sacrifice your lives (in the cause of God) or leave your homes," very few of them would have done it. Had they done what they were counselled to do, better had it been for them and firmer would they have become in their faith.

ولو أنا كتبنا عليهم أن اقتلوا أنفسكم أو اخرجوا من دياركم ما فعلوه إلا قليل منهم ولو أنهم فعلوا ما يوعظون به لكان خيرا لهم وأشد تثبيتا ﴿٦٦﴾

[67] In that case, We would have surely given them from Ourself a great reward;

وإذا لآتيناهم من لدنا أجرا عظيما ﴿٦٧﴾

[68] And We would surely have guided them to the straight path.

ولهديناهم صراطا مستقيما ﴿٦٨﴾

Those who are favoured by God are classified under four categories—*Anbiā*, *Siddiqīn*, *Shuh'dā* and *Sālihīn*.

Anbiā are those messengers of Divine truth who are born in different ages and among different peoples to show mankind the path of devotion to God and of righteous living. *Siddīq* is he in whom the spirit of truth is paramount, a person who by his very nature is truthful, and readily accepts the truth. *Shahīd* literally means one who bears witness or a person who by his word and deed stands for truth and gives proof thereof even at the cost of his life. *Sālihīn* are all those persons who are upright in their thought and action.

These are the four categories of people to whom the *Qur'ān* refers in the phrase, 'the way of those to whom Thou hast shown Thy favours', occuring in the opening chapter of the *Qur'ān*, 'Al-Fātihā'.

[69] And they who obey God and the Apostle shall have the privilege of companionship of those whom God hath blessed, the prophets, and the steadfast in truthfulness, and the martyrs and the upright—a goodly fellowship indeed!

وَمَن يُطِعِ ٱللَّهَ وَٱلرَّسُولَ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ مَعَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِم مِّنَ ٱلنَّبِيِّـۧنَ وَٱلصِّدِّيقِينَ وَٱلشُّهَدَآءِ وَٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ۚ وَحَسُنَ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ رَفِيقًا ﴿٦٩﴾

[70] This is a blessing from God; and sufficient is God (as witness of what they are), the possesser of all knowledge.

ذَٰلِكَ ٱلْفَضْلُ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَكَفَىٰ بِٱللَّهِ عَلِيمًا ﴿٧٠﴾

Section 10

And now the *Qur'ān* turns to refer to the intransigence of the hypocrites among Muslims in the matter of war with those opposed to the mission of the Prophet.

In every community, there are always some who are timid and lack the conviction of faith. Whenever a bold action is called for on the part of the community, not only do they abstain from participating in the action, but desire others to do likewise. But when a decision is taken to move into action, they sit on the fence watching the scene before them.

Should any mishap overtake those in action, they feel happy over it and rejoice that they were not with them. But if those in action succeed, they feel chagrined and regret that they were not with the others to enjoy the booty. They thus live a life apart from the life of the community as a whole with the result that they neither share their sorrow nor their joys.

In the early stages of the Prophet's mission, there were several such individuals in the Muslim camp. The *Qur'ān* gives a picture of their activity and styles them 'hypocrites'. The *Qur'ān* takes the occasion to emphasise that it did not call upon the Muslims to take the initiative in war and pounce upon others.

War was enjoined on them in defence of the oppressed and the helpless so as to rescue these from the clutches of their oppressors. Repeatedly does it ordain never to go to war to satisfy any personal or vicious desires but to do so solely in the cause of God and to establish justice and peace in the land.

[71] O ye who believe! Prepare yourselves carefully and advance in detachments or advance in a body, as may seem necessary.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ خُذُوا۟ حِذْرَكُمْ فَٱنفِرُوا۟ ثُبَاتٍ أَوِ ٱنفِرُوا۟ جَمِيعًا ﴿٧١﴾

[72] And among you there are some who will surely lag behind, and then if a reverse befall you, will say: "God hath been good to us in that We were not in their company."

وَإِنَّ مِنكُمْ لَمَن لَّيُبَطِّئَنَّ فَإِنْ أَصَٰبَتْكُم مُّصِيبَةٌ قَالَ قَدْ أَنْعَمَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىَّ إِذْ لَمْ أَكُن مَّعَهُمْ شَهِيدًا ﴿٧٢﴾

[73] And should success attend you from God, they will be sure to exclaim as if thy had never been among you before: "How well it would have been were we with them; we would have come by a great gain."

وَلَئِنْ أَصَٰبَكُمْ فَضْلٌ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ لَيَقُولَنَّ كَأَن لَّمْ تَكُنۢ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُۥ مَوَدَّةٌ يَٰلَيْتَنِى كُنتُ مَعَهُمْ فَأَفُوزَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٧٣﴾

[74] (Let these know) that they alone fight in the cause of God who barter the life of the present for the life to come; and him who shall fight in the cause of God, whether he be slain or comes out victorious, We will give him in the near future, a great reward.

فَلْيُقَٰتِلْ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلَّذِينَ يَشْرُونَ ٱلْحَيَوٰةَ ٱلدُّنْيَا بِٱلْءَاخِرَةِ وَمَن يُقَٰتِلْ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ فَيُقْتَلْ أَوْ يَغْلِبْ فَسَوْفَ نُؤْتِيهِ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٧٤﴾

[75] And what hath come to you that ye fight not in the cause of God and for the helpless men and women and children who cry out in agony: "O Lord! Bring us forth from this city (Mecca) whose inhabitants are oppressors and give us from Thee a protector and give us from Thee a defender."

وَمَا لَكُمْ لَا تُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
وَالْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ وَ
النِّسَاءِ وَالْوِلْدَانِ الَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ
رَبَّنَا أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْ هَٰذِهِ الْقَرْيَةِ الظَّالِمِ
أَهْلُهَا ج وَاجْعَلْ لَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ وَلِيًّا
وَاجْعَلْ لَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ نَصِيرًا ﴿٧٥﴾

[76] They who believe, fight in the cause of God and those who believe not, fight in the cause of *Taghut*, or of those who delight in mischief. Fight then the champions of Satan. Mark! The craft of Satan always proves futile.

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ
الطَّاغُوتِ فَقَاتِلُوا أَوْلِيَاءَ الشَّيْطَانِ
إِنَّ كَيْدَ الشَّيْطَانِ كَانَ ضَعِيفًا ﴿٧٦﴾ ع

SECTION 11

There was a time when the Arabs had been asked by the Prophet to desist from bloodshed and take to righteous living. This was when they were found engaged, as a matter of habit, in mutual loot and murder. Now, the situation was quite the reverse. The time now was to fight in the cause of truth and justice. But when the order to do so was issued, the hypocrites among them and those who lacked faith, began to show signs of hesitation, and wished that such an order had not been issued. What a situation! When they were called upon in days gone-by to fight for loot, none hesitated or refused to march forward. In fact, they yearned for such occasions. But now when the same people are called upon to fight in the cause of truth and justice, they hesitate and tremble. Whenever a mis-

hap befalls the Muslims, the hypocrites among them and the Jews ascribe the resultant sufferings to the Prophet, and say that it was all due to him. The *Qur'ān* says: "All is from God". He has laid down a law of life, of cause and effect, which operates in every situation. Every cause produces an effect appropriate to it. If any mishap takes place, it is you who furnish the cause for it. To foist the blame on others is not right. The Prophet of Islam is but a messenger of God and his function is but to convey the message to you. To listen or not to listen to it is your own concern. If you disregard his direction and in consequence come to trouble, then you alone are responsible for it, and not the Prophet.

The happenings at this stage show how hard and trying and how full of obstacles is the path which the leader of a mission has to pursue. It has always been observed that whenever a great movement for reform is launched by a people, a party among them display timidity and lack of interest, and set themselves in opposition. Whenever any mishap befalls the mission, they throw the blame on the leader and thus create a new ground of opposition to the mission. The *Qur'ān* asks the Prophet not to feel depressed at the behaviour of such people, but to repose his entire trust in God, and to bear in mind that God is sufficient unto him. That is what a man of high resolve should always do in such circumstances.

[77] Hast thou not marked those to whom it had been said: "Withhold your hands for a while (from war) and observe prayer and pay the poor-rate?" But when thereafter they were commanded to war, forthwith a section of them feared men (the enemy) with an awe entertainable only of God or with a greater awe and said: "Our Lord! Why hast thou commanded us to war? Couldst Thou not have given us respite for a little further term?" O Prophet, say to the people, "Small is the comfort

اَلَمْ تَرَ اِلَى الَّذِيْنَ قِيْلَ لَهُمْ كُفُّوْٓا
اَيْدِيَكُمْ وَاَقِيْمُوا الصَّلٰوةَ وَاٰتُوا الزَّكٰوةَ
فَلَمَّا كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقِتَالُ اِذَا فَرِيْقٌ
مِّنْهُمْ يَخْشَوْنَ النَّاسَ كَخَشْيَةِ اللّٰهِ
اَوْ اَشَدَّ خَشْيَةً ۚ وَقَالُوْا رَبَّنَا لِمَ
يْنَا الْقِتَالَ ۚ لَوْلَآ اَخَّرْتَنَآ
اِلٰٓى اَجَلٍ قَرِيْبٍ ؕ قُلْ مَتَاعُ الدُّنْيَا

of this world! But the next life is all good for him who has lived righteously. You shall not be wronged even to the extent of the husk on a date-stone.

قَلِيلٌ وَالْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ لِمَنِ اتَّقَىٰ
وَلَا تُظْلَمُونَ فَتِيلًا ﴿٧٧﴾

[78] Wherever ye be, death is sure to overtake you, even though you be in massive towers. If good betide them, they say: "This is from God"; and if evil betide them, they say: "This is because of thee." Say to them, O Prophet, "All is from God." What hath come to the people that they do not understand even this much?

أَيْنَ مَا تَكُونُوا يُدْرِككُّمُ الْمَوْتُ وَلَوْ كُنْتُمْ
فِي بُرُوجٍ مُشَيَّدَةٍ وَإِنْ تُصِبْهُمْ حَسَنَةٌ
يَقُولُوا هَٰذِهِ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ وَإِنْ
تُصِبْهُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ يَقُولُوا هَٰذِهِ مِنْ عِنْدِكَ
قُلْ كُلٌّ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ فَمَالِ هَٰؤُلَاءِ
الْقَوْمِ لَا يَكَادُونَ يَفْقَهُونَ حَدِيثًا

[79] (Say to every one of them): "Whatever good betideth thee is from God and whatever evil betideth thee is from themselves, and that We have (O Prophet) sent thee to mankind only as a messenger, and all-sufficing is God as witness."

مَا أَصَابَكَ مِنْ حَسَنَةٍ فَمِنَ اللَّهِ وَمَا
أَصَابَكَ مِنْ سَيِّئَةٍ فَمِنْ نَفْسِكَ وَ
أَرْسَلْنَاكَ لِلنَّاسِ رَسُولًا وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا ﴿٧٩﴾

Obedience to the Prophet is in reality obedience to God. A messenger comes from God only to transmit His message. He does not come to bend people to his personal will. You profess but lip-loyalty to him in his presence, but when out of sight you hold secret meetings at night to thwart his plans. What right have you then to attribute the result of your actions to the Prophet?

[80] Whoso obeyeth the Apostle, he indeed, obeyeth God. And for those who turn away, We have not sent thee as their keeper.

مَنْ يُطِعِ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ اللَّهَ
وَمَنْ تَوَلَّىٰ فَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَفِيظًا ﴿٨٠﴾

[81] They say: "We obey!" But when they are away from thy presence, a party of them meet together by night to plan against what thou hast said. God recordeth the plans they make. So keep clear

وَيَقُولُونَ طَاعَةٌ فَإِذَا بَرَزُوا مِنْ
عِنْدِكَ بَيَّتَ طَائِفَةٌ مِنْهُمْ غَيْرَ الَّذِي
تَقُولُ وَاللَّهُ يَكْتُبُ مَا يُبَيِّتُونَ فَأَعْرِضْ

of them, and put thou thy trust in God; and all sufficing is God as protector.

عَنْهُمْ وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللّٰهِ ۚ وَكَفٰى بِاللّٰهِ وَكِيْلًا ﴿٨١﴾

In verse 82, the *Qur'ān* calls upon man to ponder on what it contains. So, it is not correct to say that its contents could only be understood properly by *Imams* and *Mujtahids* (religious leaders) alone.

He alone may be regarded as having pondered aright on the contents of the *Qur'ān* who not only knows what they are, but profits by drawing from them valid conclusions for his conduct in life. On the other hand, a blind believer in the Qur'ānic views held by others is hardly capable of pondering on its contents. He who reflects over what it offers, will assuredly come to the conclusion that it indeed is the word of God.

[82] Do they not ponder on the *Qur'ān*? Were it from any other than God, they would surely have found in it many inconsistencies.

أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُوْنَ الْقُرْاٰنَ ۚ وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ غَيْرِ اللّٰهِ لَوَجَدُوْا فِيْهِ اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيْرًا ﴿٨٢﴾

[83] And whenever any tiding of security or alarm came to them they spread it abroad. Had they only carried it to the Apostle or to those in authority among them, surely they would have known what it was from those who were in a position to get at the truth of it. Were it not for God's goodness and graciousness towards you, all except a few of you would have followed Satan.

وَإِذَا جَآءَهُمْ أَمْرٌ مِّنَ الْأَمْنِ أَوِ الْخَوْفِ أَذَاعُوْا بِهٖ ۖ وَلَوْ رَدُّوْهُ إِلَى الرَّسُوْلِ وَإِلٰٓى أُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْهُمْ لَعَلِمَهُ الَّذِيْنَ يَسْتَنْبِطُوْنَهٗ مِنْهُمْ ۗ وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللّٰهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهٗ لَاتَّبَعْتُمُ الشَّيْطٰنَ إِلَّا قَلِيْلًا ﴿٨٣﴾

[84] O Prophet! Fight then in the cause of God. Thou art not responsible except for thyself. And urge on the faithful (to fight). May be, God will soon counter the onslaught of the unbelievers; for God is the stronger in power and the stronger to punish.

فَقَاتِلْ فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ ۚ لَا تُكَلَّفُ إِلَّا نَفْسَكَ وَحَرِّضِ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ۚ عَسَى اللّٰهُ أَنْ يَّكُفَّ بَأْسَ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا ۗ وَاللّٰهُ أَشَدُّ بَأْسًا وَّأَشَدُّ تَنْكِيْلًا ﴿٨٤﴾

[85] He who intercedes in a good cause shall share its good result, and he who intercedes in an evil cause shall

مَنْ يَّشْفَعْ شَفَاعَةً حَسَنَةً يَّكُنْ لَّهٗ نَصِيْبٌ مِّنْهَا ۚ وَمَنْ يَّشْفَعْ شَفَاعَةً سَيِّئَةً يَّكُنْ لَّهٗ كِفْلٌ مِّنْهَا ۗ

share the evil consequence thereof; and God it is who dispenses everything.

وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُّقِيْتًا ﴿٨٥﴾

[86] When you are greeted with a greeting, then greet back with a better one or (atleast) return the compliment. God taketh count of all things.

وَاِذَا حُيِّيْتُمْ بِتَحِيَّةٍ فَحَيُّوْا بِاَحْسَنَ مِنْهَآ اَوْ رُدُّوْهَا ۭ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ حَسِيْبًا ﴿٨٦﴾

[87] God! There is none worthy of devotion but He. He will assuredly assemble you on the Day of Resurrection. There is no doubt about it. And whose word is truer than God's?

اَللّٰهُ لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ ۭ لَيَجْمَعَنَّكُمْ اِلٰى يَوْمِ الْقِيٰمَةِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيْهِ ۭ وَمَنْ اَصْدَقُ مِنَ اللّٰهِ حَدِيْثًا ﴿٨٧﴾

SECTION 12

Some of the infidels of Mecca, realising in due course that Islam was a growing power, tried to create the impression that they were friends of the Prophet; but at heart they really were not. So, when war was declared against the enemies of the Faith, the Muslims were found to be divided in opinion in regard to the *bona-fides* of these Meccans. Some said that they were on their side; others said that they really were of the enemy camp.

It was at this juncture that the *Qur'ān* clearly announced that these people were veritable hypocrites. They might, however, be given the chance of proving their loyalty. Should they agree to come out of Mecca and join their ranks at Madina, they would certainly be regarded as the faithful. Should they refuse to do so, then it should be clear to everyone that those who were in favour of the enemy should be regarded as of the enemy, and they should be dealt with accordingly.

It may be pointed out here that the hypocrites referred to in the previous chapters were those who were in Madina itself and lived amongst the Muslims as if they were of the same faith. But the hypocrites referred to in the following passage were a particular band of Meccans.

Since these Meccans were in reality hostile to the Prophet, the Muslims were asked not to enter into any fraternal relations

with them. But it was pointed out at the same time that exception may be made in respect of two sets of people among them—those from Mecca who would seek asylum with any tribe in alliance with the Prophet, and those who observe neutrality. The Muslims were asked not to raise their arms against these two categories of people and indeed were permitted to retain social connections with them. The underlying principle is that it is not proper to raise one's arm against him who does not raise his arm against you.

You are asked to go to war not because you wish to do so, but because those inimical to you are resolved on war. The essential aim before you should be to establish peace in the land, and not to wage war for its own sake.

[88] What hath come to you that you should split into two parties in respect of the hypocrites, although (as you know) God hath cast them off for their doings. Desire ye to turn back to the right way those whom, (because) of their confirmed perversity, God hath denied the right way. For him whom God hath had to deny the right way, thou shalt by no means find a way.

فَمَا لَكُمْ فِي الْمُنَافِقِينَ فِئَتَيْنِ وَاللَّهُ أَرْكَسَهُم بِمَا كَسَبُوا أَتُرِيدُونَ أَن تَهْدُوا مَنْ أَضَلَّ اللَّهُ وَمَن يُضْلِلِ اللَّهُ فَلَن تَجِدَ لَهُ سَبِيلًا ﴿٨٨﴾

[89] They desire you to be unfaithful, even as they are, and be on a level with them. Take not therefore any of them for friends till they have forsaken their homes in the cause of God; but if they turn traitors, catch and put them down wherever you find them, and do not take any of them for friends and helpers.

وَدُّوا لَوْ تَكْفُرُونَ كَمَا كَفَرُوا فَتَكُونُونَ سَوَاءً فَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا مِنْهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءَ حَتَّىٰ يُهَاجِرُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا فَخُذُوهُمْ وَاقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ وَجَدتُّمُوهُمْ وَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا مِنْهُمْ وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا ﴿٨٩﴾

[90] Except those who have sought an asylum with a people betwixt whom and you there is alliance, or have come over to you, their hearts forbidding them to make war with you or to make war on their

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ يَصِلُونَ إِلَىٰ قَوْمٍ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُم مِّيثَاقٌ أَوْ جَاءُوكُمْ حَصِرَتْ صُدُورُهُمْ أَن يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ أَوْ يُقَاتِلُوا قَوْمَهُمْ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَسَلَّطَهُمْ

own people; and had God pleased, He would have certainly given them power against you and they then would surely have made war upon you. If then, they leave you alone and make not war upon you and offer you peace, then God alloweth you no cause to proceed against them.

عَلَيْكُمْ فَلَقٰتَلُوْكُمْ ۚ فَاِنِ اعْتَزَلُوْكُمْ فَلَمْ يُقَاتِلُوْكُمْ وَاَلْقَوْا اِلَيْكُمُ السَّلَمَ فَمَا جَعَلَ اللّٰهُ لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ سَبِيْلًا ﴿٩٠﴾

[91] You will soon find that there are some who wish to be safe from you and to be safe from their own people. So oft as they are drawn to mischief, they plunge into it. If then they leave you not alone, not offer peace, nor stay their hands aginst you, catch them and put them down wherever you find them. We have given you a clear sanction against these.

سَتَجِدُوْنَ اٰخَرِيْنَ يُرِيْدُوْنَ اَنْ يَّاْمَنُوْكُمْ وَيَاْمَنُوْا قَوْمَهُمْ ۗ كُلَّمَا رُدُّوْٓا اِلَى الْفِتْنَةِ اُرْكِسُوْا فِيْهَا ۚ فَاِنْ لَّمْ يَعْتَزِلُوْكُمْ وَيُلْقُوْٓا اِلَيْكُمُ السَّلَمَ وَيَكُفُّوْٓا اَيْدِيَهُمْ فَخُذُوْهُمْ وَاقْتُلُوْهُمْ حَيْثُ ثَقِفْتُمُوْهُمْ ۗ وَاُولٰٓئِكُمْ جَعَلْنَا لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطٰنًا مُّبِيْنًا ﴿٩١﴾

SECTION 13

The order to put down certain people was given because they were in a state of war with the Muslims. Else, it is a great sin to kill anybody under any circumstance. It is a different matter if a Muslim or one belonging to a people in alliance with Muslims is killed through suspicion or by mistake. The *Qur'ān* allows requisite compensation in such cases. But it is clear hat killing is impermissible except in two situations—state of war or man-slaughter.

[92] It is not for a believer to slay another believer except by mishap. And whoso slayeth a believer by mishap shall set free a believing bondsman and pay blood-money to his family unless they forego it as a matter of charity. But if the slain belonged to a people hostile to you and he was a believer, then set free a believing bondsman; and if the

وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ اَنْ يَّقْتُلَ مُؤْمِنًا اِلَّا خَطَـًٔا ۚ وَمَنْ قَتَلَ مُؤْمِنًا خَطَـًٔا فَتَحْرِيْرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُّؤْمِنَةٍ وَّدِيَةٌ مُّسَلَّمَةٌ اِلٰٓى اَهْلِهٖٓ اِلَّآ اَنْ يَّصَّدَّقُوْا ۗ فَاِنْ كَانَ مِنْ قَوْمٍ عَدُوٍّ لَّكُمْ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ

slain belonged to a people between whom and you there is alliance, then let the blood-money be paid to his family and a believing bondsman be also set free; but he who hath not the means for this should fast two consecutive months. This is a penance enjoined by God by way of repentence. God, the Wise, knoweth why He does so.

فَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُّؤْمِنَةٍ وَإِن كَانَ مِن قَوْمٍ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُم مِّيثَاقٌ فَدِيَةٌ مُّسَلَّمَةٌ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِ وَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُّؤْمِنَةٍ فَمَن لَّمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ شَهْرَيْنِ مُتَتَابِعَيْنِ تَوْبَةً مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿٩٢﴾

Should any one deliberately kill a Muslim, he will suffer in hell.

[93] But whoever shall kill a believer intentionally, his recompense shall be Hell to abide therein: God's displeasure will rest on him and He shall cast him away and prepare for him a great chastisement.

وَمَن يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُّتَعَمِّدًا فَجَزَاؤُهُ جَهَنَّمُ خَالِدًا فِيهَا وَغَضِبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَلَعَنَهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُ عَذَابًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٩٣﴾

[94] O ye who believe! When you go forth to fight in the cause of God, be discerning, and say not to every one who offers you greetings in the Islamic way, "You are not a believer", (just to find an excuse to kill him) coveting to appropriate (his belongings as spoils of war) the good things of the present life. Do not forget that with God are in abundance the things that you seek as spoils of war. In like position were ye before, but God hath been gracious to you. Be discerning then, for God well-knoweth what you do.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا ضَرَبْتُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَتَبَيَّنُوا وَلَا تَقُولُوا لِمَنْ أَلْقَىٰ إِلَيْكُمُ السَّلَامَ لَسْتَ مُؤْمِنًا تَبْتَغُونَ عَرَضَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا فَعِندَ اللَّهِ مَغَانِمُ كَثِيرَةٌ كَذَٰلِكَ كُنتُم مِّن قَبْلُ فَمَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ فَتَبَيَّنُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا ﴿٩٤﴾

Every good deed has a reward from God. But good deeds are graded in value. Those who lay down their lives in the cause of God, surely attain the highest rank.

[95] Those of the believers who sit at home, barring the disabled, and those who in the cause of God sacrifice their property and their persons cannot be esteemed alike. God hath assigned to those who contend with their property and their persons a rank above those who sit at home; and though to all God hath made goodly promises, He hath assigned to those who fight in the cause of God a greater recompense than to those who merely sit at home—

لَا يَسْتَوِي الْقَاعِدُونَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ
غَيْرُ أُولِي الضَّرَرِ وَالْمُجَاهِدُونَ فِي
سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ ۚ
فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ الْمُجَاهِدِينَ بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ
وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ عَلَى الْقَاعِدِينَ دَرَجَةً ۚ
وَكُلًّا وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الْحُسْنَىٰ ۚ وَفَضَّلَ اللَّهُ
الْمُجَاهِدِينَ عَلَى الْقَاعِدِينَ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٩٥﴾

[96] Ranks, forgiveness and favours from Him; and verily God is indulgent, Merciful.

دَرَجَاتٍ مِنْهُ وَمَغْفِرَةً وَرَحْمَةً ۚ
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا ﴿٩٦﴾

SECTION 14

When the Muslims migrated to Madina to escape persecution at Mecca, Arabia was divided into two regions—one 'Darul Hijrat' or place of refuge and the other 'Darul Harb' or hostile land with Mecca as its centre.

The Muslims who were left behind in the Darul-Harb were subject to severe persecution and endless suffering. These were advised to come away from Mecca, if they had facilities to do so. Those who had not the means of escape, their staying away was explicable. But those who had the means to do so and yet would not seek refuge and remain content with their state of humiliation, were committing a sin and hell would be their recompense. Those who would forsake their homes and come out will surely secure better homes and better means of comfortable living.

[97] While taking the souls of those who were engaged in pursuits hurtful to themselves, the angels will ask them: "Why were you in this state?" They will

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَوَفَّاهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ ظَالِمِي
أَنْفُسِهِمْ قَالُوا فِيمَ كُنْتُمْ ۖ قَالُوا كُنَّا
مُسْتَضْعَفِينَ فِي الْأَرْضِ ۚ قَالُوا أَلَمْ

reply: "We were but a subject race in the land." The angels will rejoin: "Was not God's earth wide enough for you to migrate elsewhere?" These! their home shall be Hell—an evil destination indeed.

[98] The feeble among men and women and children who had not the ability to seek means (of escape) and did not really know whither to go—

[99] These, maybe, God will pardon; for, God is ever ready to overlook; the Forgiver!

[100] He who leaves his home in the cause of God shall find in the Earth many a place of refuge and plentiful resources; and for him who quits his home to turn to God and His apostle, and death overtakes him thereafter, the recompense becomes incumbent on God; and God is Indulgent, Merciful!

تَكُنْ أَرْضُ اللّٰهِ وَاسِعَةً فَتُهَاجِرُوْا
فِيْهَا فَأُولٰٓئِكَ مَأْوٰىهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ وَسَآءَتْ مَصِيْرًا ﴿٩٧﴾
إِلَّا الْمُسْتَضْعَفِيْنَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ
وَالنِّسَآءِ وَالْوِلْدَانِ لَا يَسْتَطِيْعُوْنَ
حِيْلَةً وَّلَا يَهْتَدُوْنَ سَبِيْلًا ﴿٩٨﴾
فَأُولٰٓئِكَ عَسَى اللّٰهُ أَنْ يَّعْفُوَ عَنْهُمْ
وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ عَفُوًّا غَفُوْرًا ﴿٩٩﴾
وَمَنْ يُّهَاجِرْ فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ يَجِدْ
فِي الْأَرْضِ مُرٰغَمًا كَثِيْرًا وَّسَعَةً وَمَنْ
يَّخْرُجْ مِنْ بَيْتِهٖ مُهَاجِرًا إِلَى اللّٰهِ وَ
رَسُوْلِهٖ ثُمَّ يُدْرِكْهُ الْمَوْتُ فَقَدْ وَقَعَ
أَجْرُهٗ عَلَى اللّٰهِ وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ غَفُوْرًا رَّحِيْمًا ﴿١٠٠﴾ ع

SECTION 15

Here follow instructions touching the manner of prayer while on a journey, as well as, while engaged on the battlefield. The injunction is also issued making daily prayer at stated hours obligatory on every Muslim.

While on a journey, one is required to shorten his prayer. The injunction was issued at first during a period of warfare. But the privilege, styled *Qasr*, was confined to the obligatory prayer consisting of four *rakats*. The reduction is by a half.

Should even this be not possible on the battlefield, a further reduction is recommended which only emphasises that prayer should not be neglected under any circumstances. Occasions might arise when even this is not possible, as it happened in the battle of the Ditch. The missed prayer is then to be gone

through when one is free to do so. The general rule is to offer each prayer at the prescribed hour.

[101] And when ye go forth (for battle) in the land, it will not be a sin on your part that you shorten your prayer, if ye fear that the unbelievers will molest you. The unbelievers are indeed your open enemies.

وَإِذَا ضَرَبْتُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَلَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ
جُنَاحٌ أَنْ تَقْصُرُوا مِنَ الصَّلَوٰةِ
إِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَنْ يَفْتِنَكُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
إِنَّ الْكَافِرِينَ كَانُوا لَكُمْ عَدُوًّا مُبِينًا ﴿١٠١﴾

[102] And when thou (O Apostle) art amongst them (the Muslims who are on their march), and thou art to arrange prayer for them, let these retain their arms. When these have done their *Sijda*, let them retire to the rear, and let another batch pray with thee; but let them take their precaution and retain their arms. The unbelievers wish that you should be careless of your arms and baggage so that they might suddenly fall on you. But it will be no blame on you to lay down your arms if rain troubles you or you are ailing; but take precaution. God indeed hath prepared for the unbelievers a humiliating chastisement.

وَإِذَا كُنْتَ فِيهِمْ فَأَقَمْتَ لَهُمُ الصَّلَوٰةَ
فَلْتَقُمْ طَائِفَةٌ مِنْهُمْ مَعَكَ وَ
لْيَأْخُذُوا أَسْلِحَتَهُمْ فَإِذَا سَجَدُوا
فَلْيَكُونُوا مِنْ وَرَائِكُمْ وَلْتَأْتِ
طَائِفَةٌ أُخْرَىٰ لَمْ يُصَلُّوا فَلْيُصَلُّوا
مَعَكَ وَلْيَأْخُذُوا حِذْرَهُمْ وَأَسْلِحَتَهُمْ
وَدَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْ تَغْفُلُونَ عَنْ
أَسْلِحَتِكُمْ وَأَمْتِعَتِكُمْ فَيَمِيلُونَ
عَلَيْكُمْ مَيْلَةً وَاحِدَةً وَلَا جُنَاحَ
عَلَيْكُمْ إِنْ كَانَ بِكُمْ أَذًى مِنْ مَطَرٍ أَوْ
كُنْتُمْ مَرْضَىٰ أَنْ تَضَعُوا أَسْلِحَتَكُمْ وَخُذُوا
حِذْرَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ أَعَدَّ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابًا مُهِينًا ﴿١٠٢﴾

[103] And when you have finished the prayer (in this state of insecurity), remember God, standing and sitting and reclining; and when you feel secure, perform the regular prayer; indeed the faithful are enjoined prayer at stated hours.

فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُمُ الصَّلَوٰةَ فَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ
قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِكُمْ فَإِذَا
اطْمَأْنَنْتُمْ فَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَوٰةَ إِنَّ الصَّلَوٰةَ كَانَتْ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ كِتَابًا مَوْقُوتًا ﴿١٠٣﴾

In the pursuit of a serious objective, one has to face trials and tribulations. But a believer in God faces these with cheer; for he has a high purpose to serve. He believes that whatever ~~trial~~ he has to face, he does so in the way of God and truth, and that to do so is to achieve success both here and in the Hereafter.

[104] Slacken not the pursuit of the enemy, if ye feel tired. Assuredly they too feel alike; (but ye have this advantage) that ye rest your hopes in God while they do not. And God is Knowing, Wise!

وَلَا تَهِنُوا فِي ابْتِغَاءِ الْقَوْمِ ۖ إِن تَكُونُوا تَأْلَمُونَ فَإِنَّهُمْ يَأْلَمُونَ كَمَا تَأْلَمُونَ ۖ وَتَرْجُونَ مِنَ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَرْجُونَ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا

SECTION 16

The *Qur'ān* turns again to the subject of justice.

The verses following relate to an incident recorded in certain traditions of the Prophet. A man by name At'ama mortgaged a stolen article with a Jew. When the matter was brought to the notice of the Prophet, the Jew disclosed facts as they actually happened. The people of the tribe of Aberaq to which At'ama belonged, in order to save him from the penalty of the crime that he had committed, tried to foist the theft of the article on the Jew. The fact was that At'ama had persuaded the leaders of his tribe during the night to protect him from the consequences of his evil deed. It was at this hour that the following directions were delivered.

(1) A Muslim judge or magistrate should dispense justice and nothing but justice between two parties, whether they are Muslims or non-Muslims.

(2) The Judge should always be mindful of God and seek His help to keep him staunch in his adherence to truth and never to fall into temptation.

(3) The Judge should never say anything which may smack of favouritism.

(4) It is not meet for Muslims to support a criminal on the basis of religious affinity or family relationship.

(5) A criminal, and none else, is responsible for his crime. So none should feel that any stigma would be attached to him should any relation of his suffer the consequences of his evil deeds.

(6) To commit a crime and foist it on another is to commit a double crime. One may cheat a court of law of this world; but he cannot cheat the court of God.

[105] Verily, We have sent down to thee the Book in proper form that thou may judge between men according to the light God has given thee, and do not plead for the dishonest.

إِنَّا أَنزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ لِتَحْكُمَ
بَيْنَ النَّاسِ بِمَا أَرَاكَ اللَّهُ ۚ وَلَا تَكُن
لِّلْخَائِنِينَ خَصِيمًا ﴿١٠٥﴾

[106] And ask for God's protection. Verily it is God who protects, the Merciful.

وَاسْتَغْفِرِ اللَّهَ ۖ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا ﴿١٠٦﴾

[107] And plead not for those who deceive, for God loveth not him who is deceitful, sinful.

وَلَا تُجَادِلْ عَنِ الَّذِينَ يَخْتَانُونَ أَنفُسَهُمْ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ مَن كَانَ خَوَّانًا أَثِيمًا ﴿١٠٧﴾

[108] They may hide (their deceit) from men; but they cannot hide (it) from God; for, He is with them even when they hold nightly counsels which please Him not. And God always gets round their doings.

يَسْتَخْفُونَ مِنَ النَّاسِ وَلَا يَسْتَخْفُونَ
مِنَ اللَّهِ وَهُوَ مَعَهُمْ إِذْ يُبَيِّتُونَ
مَا لَا يَرْضَىٰ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ
بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ مُحِيطًا ﴿١٠٨﴾

[109] Behold! It is for such people that you have pleaded during their life of this world. But who will plead for them with God on the Day of Resurrection or who will be their champion?

هَا أَنتُمْ هَٰؤُلَاءِ جَادَلْتُمْ عَنْهُمْ فِي
الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا فَمَن يُجَادِلُ اللَّهَ عَنْهُمْ
يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ أَم مَّن يَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَكِيلًا ﴿١٠٩﴾

[110] He who doth evil really acteth against his own self and yet when he thereafter asketh pardon of God, he will find God forgiving, merciful.

أَوْ يَظْلِمْ نَفْسَهُ ثُمَّ
يَسْتَغْفِرِ اللَّهَ يَجِدِ اللَّهَ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا ﴿١١٠﴾

[111] And whosoever committeth a sin doth so to his own hurt, and verily God is the Knowing, the Wise.

وَمَن يَكْسِبْ إِثْمًا فَإِنَّمَا يَكْسِبُهُ
عَلَىٰ نَفْسِهِ ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١١١﴾

[112] And whoever committeth a fault or a sin and foisteth it on the innocent, hath indeed taken upon himself the (added) burden of calumny and manifest sin.

وَمَن يَكْسِبْ خَطِيئَةً أَوْ إِثْمًا ثُمَّ يَرْمِ
بِهِ بَرِيئًا فَقَدِ احْتَمَلَ بُهْتَانًا وَإِثْمًا مُّبِينًا ﴿١١٢﴾

SECTION 17

It appears from the traditions of the Prophet that when he acquitted the Jew in the case of At'ama referred to above, At'ama went over to the infidels at Mecca. It is then that the *Qur'ān* observes that he who turns away from the path of rectitude which had been clearly shown to him and has taken to

the path of evil, he will reap the inevitable consequence. That is the law of life fixed by God. He who takes to the path that leads to heaven will assuredly reach heaven; and he who moves towards hell, will assuredly reach his destination.

[113] But for the grace and mercy of God bestowed on thee a party of them would have surely misled thee. But they shall not mislead except themselves, and shall not harm thee in the least; for, God hath sent down to thee the Book and the Wisdom and taught thee what thou knew not, and surely great has been the grace of God towards thee.

وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللّٰهِ عَلَيْكَ وَرَحْمَتُهٗ لَهَمَّتْ طَّآئِفَةٌ مِّنْهُمْ اَنْ يُّضِلُّوْكَ ؕ وَمَا يُضِلُّوْنَ اِلَّاۤ اَنْفُسَهُمْ وَمَا يَضُرُّوْنَكَ مِنْ شَيْءٍ ؕ وَاَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتٰبَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَعَلَّمَكَ مَا لَمْ تَكُنْ تَعْلَمُ ؕ وَكَانَ فَضْلُ اللّٰهِ عَلَيْكَ عَظِيْمًا ﴿١١٣﴾

[114] Most of their talks in secrecy are not held in any good cause. But there is good only when one enjoineth (in secrecy) almsgiving, or that which is right or promotes goodwill among men—whoso doth this out of a desire to please God, We shall anon bestow on him a great reward.

لَا خَيْرَ فِيْ كَثِيْرٍ مِّنْ نَّجْوٰىهُمْ اِلَّا مَنْ اَمَرَ بِصَدَقَةٍ اَوْ مَعْرُوْفٍ اَوْ اِصْلَاحٍۢ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ ؕ وَمَنْ يَّفْعَلْ ذٰلِكَ ابْتِغَآءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللّٰهِ فَسَوْفَ نُؤْتِيْهِ اَجْرًا عَظِيْمًا ﴿١١٤﴾

[115] As for him who sets himself against the Apostle despite the opening out for him the right path and follows any path other than that of the faithful, We will let him go the way he hath chosen for himself and We will cast him into Hell—an evil destination indeed!

وَمَنْ يُّشَاقِقِ الرَّسُوْلَ مِنْۢ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ الْهُدٰى وَيَتَّبِعْ غَيْرَ سَبِيْلِ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ نُوَلِّهٖ مَا تَوَلّٰى وَنُصْلِهٖ جَهَنَّمَ ؕ وَسَآءَتْ مَصِيْرًا ﴿١١٥﴾ ع

SECTION 18

The *Qur'ān* then warns men not to take to polytheism. It points out that every sin is forgivable except the sin of *shirk* or setting up compeers for God. The *Qur'ān* here draws attention to certain beliefs and evil customs of the Arabs including the disfiguring of the human body such as castration of males.

[116] Truly God will not forgive the setting up of compeers for Him. Anything else He will forgive to whom He will. But he who sets up compeers for God surely has gone astray.

ان الله لا يغفر ان يشرك به ويغفر ما دون ذلك لمن يشاء ط ومن يشرك بالله فقد ضل ضلالا بعيدا ﴿١١٦﴾

[117] Beside God they call upon goddesses and invoke the rebel Satan;

ان يدعون من دونه الا انثا ج وان يدعون الا شيطنا مريدا ﴿١١٧﴾

[118] God hath cast him away who hath said: "I shall draw to myself a definite number of thy servants,

لعنه الله م وقال لاتخذن من عبادك نصيبا مفروضا ﴿١١٨﴾

وقف لازم

[119] "And I will lead them astray and will raise for them vain hopes and will so direct them that they split the ears of animals and disfigure God's creation." And he who shall take Satan rather than God for a friend shall surely suffer undoubted loss.

ولاضلنهم ولامنينهم ولامرنهم فليبتكن اذان الانعام ولامرنهم فليغيرن خلق الله ط ومن يتخذ الشيطن وليا من دون الله فقد خسر خسرانا مبينا ﴿١١٩﴾

[120] He maketh them promises and filleth them with vain hopes; and what Satan promiseth is nothing but illusory.

يعدهم ويمنيهم ط وما يعدهم الشيطن الا غرورا ﴿١٢٠﴾

[121] These! The abode of these shall be Hell and they shall find no way of escape therefrom.

اولئك ماوىهم جهنم ز ولا يجدون عنها محيصا ﴿١٢١﴾

[122] As for those who believe and do good deeds, We will anon admit them to gardens in which rivers flow to dwell therein forever. The promise of God is incontrovertible and whose word can be truer than God's!

والذين امنوا وعملوا الصلحت سندخلهم جنت تجري من تحتها الانهر خلدين فيها ابدا ط وعد الله حقا ط ومن اصدق من الله قيلا ﴿١٢٢﴾

Having referred to the errors and superstitions into which the Arabs had fallen, the *Qur'ān* now turns to refer to a like condition prevailing among the Jews. Even like the Arabs, they lived in a world of fancies caring little for righteous living. The Jews used to say that they were the chosen people of God and that hell-fire would never touch them. In

like manner, the Christians pinned their faith on the crucifixion of Christ, and said that salvation was for them only. The *Qur'ān* warns the Muslims not to fall into such error and entertain wild hopes in respect of their future. The law of God is clear enough that he who does an evil deed will suffer its consequences, be he a Jew or a Christian or of any other. According to a tradition of the Prophet narrated by Ibn-e-Jarir, this law of life was enunciated in the verse below when a party of the Jews was contending with a party of Muslims that they alone were entitled to enter Heaven. The *Qur'ān* emphasises that salvation is for him who believes in God and lives righteously in accordance with that belief.

[123] It is not your wishes or the wishes of the people of the Book which matter. He who doth evil shall reap the consequences thereof, and he shall not find for himself, save God, a friend or a helper.

لَيْسَ بِأَمَانِيِّكُمْ وَلَآ أَمَانِيِّ أَهْلِ الْكِتٰبِ ۗ مَنْ يَّعْمَلْ سُوْٓءًا يُّجْزَ بِهٖ وَلَا يَجِدْ لَهٗ مِنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ وَلِيًّا وَّلَا نَصِيْرًا ﴿١٢٣﴾

[124] But whoso shall do good deeds—man or woman, provided one is a believer—, these shall enter the Garden, and they shall not be wronged the speck of a date-stone.

وَمَنْ يَّعْمَلْ مِنَ الصّٰلِحٰتِ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ اَوْ اُنْثٰى وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ يَدْخُلُوْنَ الْجَنَّةَ وَلَا يُظْلَمُوْنَ نَقِيْرًا ﴿١٢٤﴾

[125] And who is there who resigneth himself to God and doth good to others and followeth the faith of Abraham, the staunch? And God took Abraham for a friend.

وَمَنْ اَحْسَنُ دِيْنًا مِّمَّنْ اَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهٗ لِلّٰهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ وَّاتَّبَعَ مِلَّةَ اِبْرٰهِيْمَ حَنِيْفًا ۗ وَاتَّخَذَ اللّٰهُ اِبْرٰهِيْمَ خَلِيْلًا ﴿١٢٥﴾

[126] And to God belongeth all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth and God indeed encompasseth all things.

وَلِلّٰهِ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْاَرْضِ ۗ وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُّحِيْطًا ﴿١٢٦﴾ ع

SECTION 19

Now follow the verses which clarify the provisions touching inheritance. The clarification was furnished in response to questions addressed to the Prophet on certain details of the subject. (*Ibn-e-Jarir*).

(1) In pre-Islamic Arabia, a guardian very often married an orphan who happened to be his ward, specially when he found her to be beautiful and entitled to property. If the girl was not beautiful, the guardian connived at her marriage with another, provided he was assured that he would receive a portion of her property for himself. At times, he would arrange her marriage with the idea of receiving the dower due to her. If he could make no profit in either way, the usual practice with a guardian was to let her go without marriage so that she might not be in a position to claim her property. The *Qur'ān* had at the very beginning of the chapter issued the requisite injunction to put a stop to this evil practice. The injunction is reiterated here.

[127] They seek thy instruction concerning women. Say, "God hath instructed you about them; and His will is rehearsed to you in the Book concerning female orphans to whom you deny their legal due and whom you also wish to marry in order to appropriate their property as well, and also concerning week children, (and what is rehearsed is) that ye deal justly with orphans and God indeed knoweth whatsoever good ye do.

وَيَسْتَفْتُونَكَ فِي النِّسَاءِ ۖ قُلِ اللَّهُ
يُفْتِيكُمْ فِيهِنَّ ۙ وَمَا يُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ
فِي الْكِتَابِ فِي يَتَامَى النِّسَاءِ اللَّاتِي لَا
تُؤْتُونَهُنَّ مَا كُتِبَ لَهُنَّ وَتَرْغَبُونَ
أَنْ تَنْكِحُوهُنَّ وَالْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ
مِنَ الْوِلْدَانِ ۙ وَأَنْ تَقُومُوا لِلْيَتَامَىٰ
بِالْقِسْطِ ۚ وَمَا تَفْعَلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِهِ عَلِيمًا ﴿١٢٧﴾

The *Qur'ān* had already discountenanced forcible appropriation by the husband of his wife's property. Now a certain latitude is allowed. If in the interests of happy relations between the husband and the wife, the wife willingly foregoes in his favour a portion of her property, the action will not be regarded as resulting from compulsion. It should be regarded as an act of mutual adjustment between the two.

By prescribing impartiality between one's wives, if there are more than one, it does not mean that one should afford sexual

satisfaction to every one of them in equal measure, for, this is ordinarily beyond one's control. The object of the injunction is that as far as possible, you should be equitable in your dealings with them, and not show any partiality for any of them. At all events, each wife should have means of equal comfort with others—means such as residence, dress and food—in order that one and all might observe an equal standard of living. Should you, however, feel that even in such matters you cannot maintain this standard for them, it is better that you have only one wife.

[128] But if a woman fears from her husband ill-treatment or estrangement, then, it shall be no fault in them, if they settle things between them amicably. An amicable settlement is always good. The mind of man is prone to emphasise self-interest. But if you act with an eye on the interest of others, and be mindful of God, then your actions will certainly not go unnoticed by God.

[129] It will not be possible for you to hold the balance evenly between women, however keenly you may desire it. Do not for that reason incline wholly to one, leaving another like one in suspense. But if you observe fairness and avoid excesses, (you will find that) God indeed is Forgiving, Merciful.

[130] If the two separate, God will provide both out of His abundance; and God is indeed Bountiful, the Wise.

وَإِنِ امْرَأَةٌ خَافَتْ مِنْ بَعْلِهَا
نُشُوزًا أَوْ إِعْرَاضًا فَلَا جُنَاحَ
عَلَيْهِمَا أَنْ يُصْلِحَا بَيْنَهُمَا صُلْحًا ۚ
وَالصُّلْحُ خَيْرٌ ۗ وَأُحْضِرَتِ الْأَنْفُسُ
الشُّحَّ ۚ وَإِنْ تُحْسِنُوا وَتَتَّقُوا فَإِنَّ
اللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا ﴿١٢٨﴾
وَلَنْ تَسْتَطِيعُوا أَنْ تَعْدِلُوا بَيْنَ النِّسَاءِ
وَلَوْ حَرَصْتُمْ ۖ فَلَا تَمِيلُوا كُلَّ الْمَيْلِ
فَتَذَرُوهَا كَالْمُعَلَّقَةِ ۚ وَإِنْ تُصْلِحُوا
وَتَتَّقُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا ﴿١٢٩﴾
وَإِنْ يَتَفَرَّقَا يُغْنِ اللَّهُ كُلًّا
مِنْ سَعَتِهِ ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ وَاسِعًا
حَكِيمًا ﴿١٣٠﴾

The directions given in the *Qur'ān* are of value to man to the extent one follows them with sincerity and steadfastness.

Many a people have come to ruin in consequence of their wrong living. Should you also take to the evil way, God will assuredly replace you by another race. So beware of going against the injunctions of God and follow the right path steadfastly.

[131] And to God belongeth all that is in the heavens and in the earth. We have already enjoined those who were given the Book before you and also yourselves to be mindful of God. But if you be not mindful of Him, (remember that) all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth is God's and God is indeed above all adulation, the Praise-worthy.

وَلِلّٰهِ مَا فِى السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِى الْاَرْضِ ؕ لَقَدْ وَصَّيْنَا الَّذِيْنَ اُوْتُوا الْكِتٰبَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ وَاِيَّاكُمْ اَنِ اتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ ؕ وَاِنْ تَكْفُرُوْا فَاِنَّ لِلّٰهِ مَا فِى السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِى الْاَرْضِ ؕ وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ غَنِيًّا حَمِيْدًا ﴿۱۳۱﴾

[132] Yea! It is God's all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth, and God sufficeth as protector.

وَلِلّٰهِ مَا فِى السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِى الْاَرْضِ ؕ وَكَفٰى بِاللّٰهِ وَكِيْلًا ﴿۱۳۲﴾

[133] O ye people! If it please God, He can put you away and bring in others, and for this hath God power undoubtedly.

اِنْ يَّشَاْ يُذْهِبْكُمْ اَيُّهَا النَّاسُ وَيَاْتِ بِاٰخَرِيْنَ ؕ وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ عَلٰى ذٰلِكَ قَدِيْرًا ﴿۱۳۳﴾

[134] Should any one desire the reward of this world, that is with God (or in the gift of God to offer) and also of the next world! And God Heareth, Seeth.

مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيْدُ ثَوَابَ الدُّنْيَا فَعِنْدَ اللّٰهِ ثَوَابُ الدُّنْيَا وَالْاٰخِرَةِ ؕ وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ سَمِيْعًا بَصِيْرًا ﴿۱۳۴﴾ ع

SECTION 20

It is meet that the Muslims should hold fast to justice, and on all occasions speak out the truth that they know, however much that truth goes against even themselves, their parents and kinsfolk. They must feel that they live only to uphold the truth. In speaking out the truth, nothing should be allowed to influence one's mind, neither the wealth of any, nor the poverty of any. Whenever you speak, speak not in uncertain terms.

[135] O ye who believe! hold fast to justice; always bear witness though it be against your own selves or (your) parents or kinsfolk, whether the party be rich or poor: God safeguards the interests of both (parties). Therefore follow not your own inclinations lest you swerve from justice. If you prevaricate or decline (to speak the truth), then verily God is aware of what you do.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ كُونُوا۟ قَوَّٰمِينَ
بِٱلْقِسْطِ شُهَدَآءَ لِلَّهِ وَلَوْ عَلَىٰٓ
أَنفُسِكُمْ أَوِ ٱلْوَٰلِدَيْنِ وَٱلْأَقْرَبِينَ
إِن يَكُنْ غَنِيًّا أَوْ فَقِيرًا فَٱللَّهُ أَوْلَىٰ
بِهِمَا فَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا۟ ٱلْهَوَىٰٓ أَن
تَعْدِلُوا۟ وَإِن تَلْوُۥٓا۟ أَوْ تُعْرِضُوا۟
فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا ١٣٥

The *Qur'ān* points out that true morality is the outcome of the sincerest devotion to God. True devotion consists in implicit faith in God as the source of all truth and in the belief that this truth had dawned on the Prophet of Islam and on all the prophets before him.

The *Qur'ān* then draws attention to the salient aspects of this faith in God. It points out that it should take the form of not only belief in God but belief in His angels, His books, and His messengers, as well as, in the Day to come. A belief such as this is the only true belief.

Speaking of the hypocrites with whom the Prophet had to deal, the *Qur'ān* observes that many a time did they avow his faith and many times did they disown it. They were never men of faith. Divine grace is therefore denied to them; and they shall never attain success in life.

[136] O ye who believe! Believe in God (in the right spirit), in His apostle and in the Book which He hath sent down to His Apostle, and in the Books which He sent down aforetime; for he who denieth God and His angels, and His Books and His

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ ءَامِنُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ وَ
رَسُولِهِۦ وَٱلْكِتَٰبِ ٱلَّذِى نَزَّلَ عَلَىٰ
رَسُولِهِۦ وَٱلْكِتَٰبِ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَنزَلَ مِن
قَبْلُ وَمَن يَكْفُرْ بِٱللَّهِ وَمَلَٰٓئِكَتِهِۦ

apostles and the Last Day hath surely gone far astray.

وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ فَقَدْ
ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا بَعِيدًا ﴿١٣٦﴾

[137] Verily, those who believe, then disbelieve, then believe again and disbelieve, and wax in unbelief, God will not forgive them, nor direct them to the right way.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ثُمَّ كَفَرُوا ثُمَّ آمَنُوا
ثُمَّ كَفَرُوا ثُمَّ ازْدَادُوا كُفْرًا لَمْ يَكُنِ اللَّهُ
لِيَغْفِرَ لَهُمْ وَلَا لِيَهْدِيَهُمْ سَبِيلًا ﴿١٣٧﴾

[138] (O Prophet!) Announce to the hypocrites that a painful chastisement doth await them.

بَشِّرِ الْمُنَافِقِينَ بِأَنَّ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا
أَلِيمًا ﴿١٣٨﴾

[139] Those who take unbelievers for friends instead of believers—do they seek honour at their hands?—(Let them know that) all honour truly cometh from God.

الَّذِينَ يَتَّخِذُونَ الْكَافِرِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ مِنْ
دُونِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۚ أَيَبْتَغُونَ عِنْدَهُمُ
الْعِزَّةَ فَإِنَّ الْعِزَّةَ لِلَّهِ جَمِيعًا ﴿١٣٩﴾

SECTION 21

Verses 140 to 143 detail some of the traits of the hypocrites.

[140] It had already been conveyed to you in the Book that when ye hear the messages of God denied and scoffed at by any body of people, sit not with them until they change the discourse; else you will be classed with them. Verily God will gather together in Hell all hypocrites and unbelievers.

وَقَدْ نَزَّلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الْكِتَابِ أَنْ
إِذَا سَمِعْتُمْ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ يُكْفَرُ بِهَا
وَيُسْتَهْزَأُ بِهَا فَلَا تَقْعُدُوا مَعَهُمْ
حَتَّىٰ يَخُوضُوا فِي حَدِيثٍ غَيْرِهِ ۚ إِنَّكُمْ إِذًا
مِثْلُهُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ جَامِعُ الْمُنَافِقِينَ وَالْكَافِرِينَ
فِي جَهَنَّمَ جَمِيعًا ﴿١٤٠﴾

[141] These are they who watch you narrowly. If victory is granted to you by God, they say: "Were we not with you?" But if success falleth to the lot of the unbelievers, they say

الَّذِينَ يَتَرَبَّصُونَ بِكُمْ فَإِنْ
كَانَ لَكُمْ فَتْحٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ قَالُوا أَلَمْ
نَكُنْ مَعَكُمْ وَإِنْ كَانَ لِلْكَافِرِينَ
نَصِيبٌ قَالُوا أَلَمْ نَسْتَحْوِذْ عَلَيْكُمْ

to them. "Did we not surround you and protect you from the believers?" Wherefore God will judge between you on the Day of Resurrection, and God will never allow the unbelievers any advantage over the believers.

وَنَمْنَعْكُم مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۚ فَاللَّهُ يَحْكُمُ
بَيْنَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ۗ وَلَن يَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ
لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ سَبِيلًا ﴿١٤١﴾

In verse 142, it is said: "The hypocrites attempt to deceive God, but He overreaches them." It is the way of God to give respite to the wrong-doers. But this does not mean that the law of recompense remains at a standstill during this period. It is all the while in operation. It only gives them time to make amends. But it so happens that a hardened sinner gets bolder on that account, and commits excesses. He hardly knows that the law, in its own time, will assuredly overtake him.

[142] Verily the hypocrites attempt to deceive God; but He overreaches them. When they stand up for prayer grudgingly, only to be seen by men, they give to God but little thought.
[143] Dangling between the one and the other, they belong wholly neither to this nor to that side. And for him whom God doth not show the way, thou shalt never find a way.

إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ يُخَادِعُونَ اللَّهَ
وَهُوَ خَادِعُهُمْ وَإِذَا قَامُوا إِلَى
الصَّلَاةِ قَامُوا كُسَالَىٰ يُرَاءُونَ النَّاسَ
وَلَا يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿١٤٢﴾
مُّذَبْذَبِينَ بَيْنَ ذَٰلِكَ لَا إِلَىٰ
هَٰؤُلَاءِ وَلَا إِلَىٰ هَٰؤُلَاءِ ۚ وَمَن يُضْلِلِ
اللَّهُ فَلَن تَجِدَ لَهُ سَبِيلًا ﴿١٤٣﴾

The *Qur'ān* calls upon the Muslims never to follow the way of the hypocrites and turn traitors to their own people by going over to the enemy in the pursuit of personal interest.

[144] O ye who believe! Take not unbelievers for friends instead of believers. Do you wish to offer God a clear proof against yourselves.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الْكَافِرِينَ
أَوْلِيَاءَ مِن دُونِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۚ أَتُرِيدُونَ
أَن تَجْعَلُوا لِلَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ سُلْطَانًا مُّبِينًا ﴿١٤٤﴾

[145] Verily the hypocrites will be in the lowest depths of the Fire; and thou shalt never find a helper for them,

إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ فِي الدَّرْكِ الْأَسْفَلِ
مِنَ النَّارِ ۚ وَلَن تَجِدَ لَهُمْ نَصِيرًا ﴿١٤٥﴾

[146] Except for those who repent and amend and lay fast hold on God and are sincere in their devotion to God. Then they shall be numbered with the believers, and God will in the end bestow on the believers a great reward.

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا وَأَصْلَحُوا وَاعْتَصَمُوا
بِاللَّهِ وَأَخْلَصُوا دِينَهُمْ لِلَّهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ
مَعَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۖ وَسَوْفَ يُؤْتِ اللَّهُ
الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿١٤٦﴾

The *Qur'ān* points out in verse 147 that God does not act under impulses and dispense pleasure and displeasure indifferently. On the other hand, He lets every human action produce its inevitable result. That is the law of life devised by God. In verse 148, the *Qur'ān* enjoins upon man not to spread abroad wilfully the weaknesses of fellow-beings. An oppressed person, however, is at liberty to raise his voice against the oppressor. The injunction not to speak publicly of anoher's weaknesses was issued to warn the Muslims not to make much of the transgressions of the hypocrites and treat them with contempt.

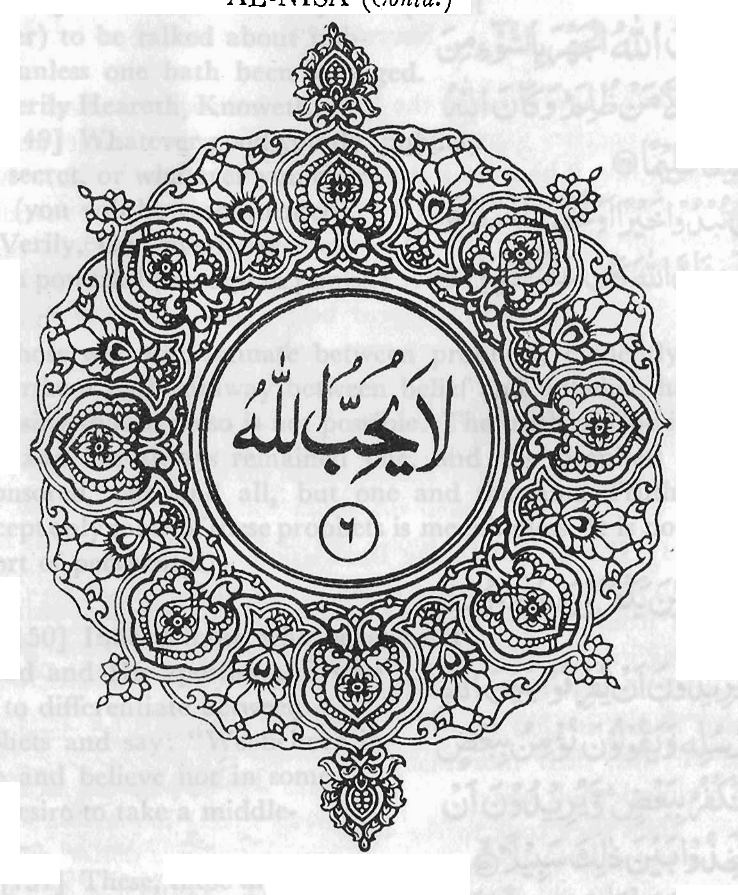
[147] Why should God deal chastisement to you if you appreciate (Divine favours) and are obedient (to His Laws)? (you must know that) God (in His turn) appreciates (every good deed of man) and is the Knower of everything.

مَّا يَفْعَلُ اللَّهُ بِعَذَابِكُمْ إِن شَكَرْتُمْ
وَآمَنتُمْ ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ شَاكِرًا عَلِيمًا ﴿١٤٧﴾

PART VI

Chapter IV

AL-NISA (*Contd.*)



[148] God liketh not any evil (about another) to be talked about publicly, unless one hath been wronged. God verily Heareth, Knoweth!

لَا يُحِبُّ اللّٰهُ الْجَهْرَ بِالسُّوْٓءِ مِنَ
الْقَوْلِ اِلَّا مَنْ ظُلِمَ ؕ وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ
سَمِيْعًا عَلِيْمًا ﴿١٤٨﴾

[149] Whatever good you do, publicly or in secret, or whatever you overlook, (you will be recompensed) for. Verily, God overlooks, though powerful (enough to punish).

اِنْ تُبْدُوْا خَيْرًا اَوْ تُخْفُوْهُ اَوْ تَعْفُوْا عَنْ
سُوْٓءٍ فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ عَفُوًّا قَدِيْرًا ﴿١٤٩﴾

Those who discriminate between prophets, evidently aim to strike a path midway between belief and unbelief, hardly realising that to do so is not possible. The truth of God is but one and has always remained one, and the prophets have sponsored, one and all, but one and the same Truth. To accept only some of these prophets is meaningless. It is nothing short of perversity.

اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ يَكْفُرُوْنَ بِاللّٰهِ وَرُسُلِهٖ

[150] Indeed those who believe not in God and His apostles and who seek to differentiate between prophets and say: "We believe in some and believe not in some," and desire to take a middle-path—

وَيُرِيْدُوْنَ اَنْ يُّفَرِّقُوْا بَيْنَ اللّٰهِ
وَرُسُلِهٖ وَيَقُوْلُوْنَ نُؤْمِنُ بِبَعْضٍ
وَّنَكْفُرُ بِبَعْضٍ ۙ وَّيُرِيْدُوْنَ اَنْ
يَّتَّخِذُوْا بَيْنَ ذٰلِكَ سَبِيْلًا ﴿١٥٠﴾

[151] These, these are indeed unbelievers, and for the unbelievers We have prepared a humiliating chastisement.

اُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْكٰفِرُوْنَ حَقًّا ۚ وَاَعْتَدْنَا
لِلْكٰفِرِيْنَ عَذَابًا مُّهِيْنًا ﴿١٥١﴾

[152] They who believe in God and His apostles and make no distinction between any of them—these! We will give them their reward at last, for, God is Gracious, Merciful.

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَلَمْ يُفَرِّقُوا بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْهُمْ أُولَٰئِكَ سَوْفَ يُؤْتِيهِمْ أُجُورَهُمْ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا ﴿١٥٢﴾

Section 22

The *Qur'ān* now turns to the Jews of Madina from whom most of the hypocrites were drawn. The Jews used to challenge the Prophet that if he were a true prophet of God, why did he not invoke God to send down His Book from above in a manner noticeable by everybody. The *Qur'ān* rejoinds that these very people had asked of Moses something greater. They had wanted God Himself to appear before them that they might behold Him with their own eyes, and every one knows what transpired. Those who are in search of Truth never entertain such a wish. They only look to the character of the message delivered and to the character of the person through whom it is delivered.

[153] The people of the Book ask of thee to make a book come down to them from above. Indeed, something greater than this had they asked of Moses! For, they had said: "Show us God openly!" And for this, their inordinacy, did a thunderbolt seize them. Then they took to the worship of the Calf even though Our clear tokens had been given them. Even this We forgave them, and conferred on Moses unquestioned authority.

يَسْأَلُكَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ أَنْ تُنَزِّلَ عَلَيْهِمْ كِتَابًا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ فَقَدْ سَأَلُوا مُوسَىٰ أَكْبَرَ مِنْ ذَٰلِكَ فَقَالُوا أَرِنَا اللَّهَ جَهْرَةً فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ الصَّاعِقَةُ بِظُلْمِهِمْ ثُمَّ اتَّخَذُوا الْعِجْلَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْهُمُ الْبَيِّنَاتُ فَعَفَوْنَا عَنْ ذَٰلِكَ وَآتَيْنَا مُوسَىٰ سُلْطَانًا مُبِينًا ﴿١٥٣﴾

[154] And We raised the mountain high above them when We made a covenant with them and said to them: "Enter the gate in submission." And We said to them also: 'Transgress not on the Sabbath." And We took from them a strict promise.

وَرَفَعْنَا فَوْقَهُمُ الطُّورَ بِمِيثَاقِهِمْ
وَقُلْنَا لَهُمُ ادْخُلُوا الْبَابَ سُجَّدًا وَّ
قُلْنَا لَهُمْ لَا تَعْدُوا فِي السَّبْتِ وَ
أَخَذْنَا مِنْهُمْ مِّيثَاقًا غَلِيظًا ﴿١٥٤﴾

[155] But because of their breaking this promise, and denying the signs of God, and slaying the prophets unjustly, while professing all along "Our hearts are repositories (of Divine knowledge)", and indeed for their unbelief hath God sealed up their hearts. So only a few have faith.

فَبِمَا نَقْضِهِم مِّيثَاقَهُمْ وَكُفْرِهِم
بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَقَتْلِهِمُ الْأَنبِيَاءَ بِغَيْرِ
حَقٍّ وَّقَوْلِهِمْ قُلُوبُنَا غُلْفٌ ۚ بَلْ
طَبَعَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهَا بِكُفْرِهِمْ فَلَا
يُؤْمِنُونَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿١٥٥﴾

The perversity of the Jews took so serious a turn that they not only denied the message of Christ but threw heinous aspersions on Mary, the mother of Christ. They coined the story that they caused his death on the cross, although neither did they crucify him nor cause his death. The truth is that God threw a shadow of doubt about him and exalted him in station.

The raising of doubt about Christ referred to in the following passage may be interpreted in two ways. One is that the identity of Christ fell into doubt and another person was raised to the cross in his place. The other is that doubts came to be entertained about the death of Christ. He was alive when the Jews thought he was dead.

The advent of Christ gave the Jews their last chance for reform. When this was missed by them, their fate was sealed for ever. A reference to this incident in the life of Christ is made only to emphasise that the Jews' opposition to the Prophet's mission was not anything new. The spirit of opposition to the Truth was indeed ingrained in them.

[156] (We have sealed up their hearts) Not merely for their unbelief but also for their charging Mary of a grievous calumny.

وَبِكُفْرِهِمْ وَقَوْلِهِمْ عَلَىٰ مَرْيَمَ بُهْتَانًا عَظِيمًا ﴿١٥٦﴾

[157] And also for boasting, "We have indeed slain the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, an apostle of God"; yet they slew him not, and they crucified him not, but it was an illusion for them: and they who hold different views in this matter were not definite about it. The knowledge they had about it was no more than a surmise. In fact they did not slay him;

وَقَوْلِهِمْ إِنَّا قَتَلْنَا الْمَسِيحَ عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا صَلَبُوهُ وَلَٰكِن شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ ۚ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ لَفِي شَكٍّ مِّنْهُ ۚ مَا لَهُم بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِلَّا اتِّبَاعَ الظَّنِّ ۚ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ يَقِينًا ﴿١٥٧﴾

[158] But God took him up to Himself, and God is Mighty, Wise!

بَل رَّفَعَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١٥٨﴾

[159] And there will not be one among the people of the Book who will not before his death believe in this and on the Day of Resurrection bear witness against them.

وَإِن مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ إِلَّا لَيُؤْمِنَنَّ بِهِ قَبْلَ مَوْتِهِ ۖ وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا ﴿١٥٩﴾

When a people forsake righteousness, they even feel tempted to exploit what is permissible and lawful in life for wrongful ends, so much so, that it becomes necessary for the reformer to suspend the concerned provisions of the law temporarily. The idea here is to put a check on the licence exercised by the Jews in matters permissible and lawful. The *Qur'ān* also draws attention to the Jewish practice of usury, although it had been specifically prohibited.

[160] For the wickedness of the Jews, We have forbidden them the goodly things which had hitherto

فَبِظُلْمٍ مِّنَ الَّذِينَ هَادُوا حَرَّ

been lawful to them and also because of their having obstructed many a person in the path of God.

عَلَيْهِمْ طَيِّبَٰتٍ أُحِلَّتْ لَهُمْ وَبِصَدِّهِمْ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ كَثِيرًا ﴿١٦٠﴾

[161] And since they have taken to usury, although it had been forbidden to them, and have devoured wrongfully others' properties, We have prepared for the unbelievers among them a grievous chastisement.

وَأَخْذِهِمُ ٱلرِّبَوٰا۟ وَقَدْ نُهُوا۟ عَنْهُ وَأَكْلِهِمْ أَمْوَٰلَ ٱلنَّاسِ بِٱلْبَٰطِلِ ۚ وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَٰفِرِينَ مِنْهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿١٦١﴾

[162] But those among them, well grounded in knowledge, and also the believers who have faith in that which hath been sent down to thee and in that which was sent down before thee, and who observe prayer, and pay the poor-rate, and have faith in God and in the Last Day— to these, We will anon give a great reward.

لَّٰكِنِ ٱلرَّٰسِخُونَ فِى ٱلْعِلْمِ مِنْهُمْ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِمَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَآ أُنزِلَ مِن قَبْلِكَ ۚ وَٱلْمُقِيمِينَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ ۚ وَٱلْمُؤْتُونَ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْءَاخِرِ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ سَنُؤْتِيهِمْ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿١٦٢﴾ ع

SECTION 23

The *Qur'ān* proclaims that the basic message of God to mankind has always been but one and the same, and that all prophets had upheld this but one truth. It is the followers of these prophets who had disturbed this fundamental principle of religion and developed sectarianism of their own, one denouncing the other. Verse 163 clarifies certain aspects of this subject:

(1) The *Qur'ān* speaks of only a few of the prophets. But the *Qur'ān* acknowledges all prophets and enjoins a belief in them all.

(2) There is no part of the world where in one age or another a prophet was not raised.

(3) In verse 162 above, it is stated that those who were firm of faith did believe in the *Qur'ān*, even as they did in the earlier scriptures, thereby demonstrating that the religion ordained by God was but one, and that even as in the case of former prophets, the truth of God had dawned on the Prophet of Islam as well.

(4) Incidentally, the misleading question raised by the Jews: 'Why was it that a written testament was not sent down to him from above?' is also here answered. It is declared that such a book was never delivered to any of the prophets. This was against the way of God. It asserts that even as God had in the past communicated His truth to His prophets by means of revelation —a revelation is an inward intimation—even so, God had imparted His truth to the Prophet of Islam by the same process of revelation.

[163] Verily we have inspired in thee Our 'word', as We had inspired in Noah, and in the prophets after him, and also as We had inspired in Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and their progeny and in Jesus and Job, and Jonah and Aaron and Solomon, and (in like manner) did we give the Psalms to David.

إِنَّآ أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْكَ كَمَآ أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَىٰ نُوحٍ وَٱلنَّبِيِّـۧنَ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِۦ ۚ وَأَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَىٰٓ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَإِسْمَٰعِيلَ وَإِسْحَٰقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَٱلْأَسْبَاطِ وَعِيسَىٰ وَأَيُّوبَ وَيُونُسَ وَهَٰرُونَ وَسُلَيْمَٰنَ ۚ وَءَاتَيْنَا دَاوُۥدَ زَبُورًا ﴿١٦٣﴾

[164] Of some apostles have We already given thee account, and of some, We have not given thee any account. (In like manner) did God converse with Moses.

وَرُسُلًا قَدْ قَصَصْنَٰهُمْ عَلَيْكَ مِن قَبْلُ وَرُسُلًا لَّمْ نَقْصُصْهُمْ عَلَيْكَ ۚ وَكَلَّمَ ٱللَّهُ مُوسَىٰ تَكْلِيمًا ﴿١٦٤﴾

[165] All these were apostles, bearers of glad tidings and warners, raised in order that men may have no plea against God after they had come. And God is Mighty, Wise.

رُّسُلًا مُّبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ لِئَلَّا يَكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ حُجَّةٌۢ بَعْدَ ٱلرُّسُلِ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١٦٥﴾

[166] God Himself bears witness (whatever one might say, O! Muhammad) to what He hath sent down to thee. Indeed He hath sent it down with His knowledge. So also do the angels bear witness, (although) sufficient is God for a witness.

لٰكِنِ اللّٰهُ يَشْهَدُ بِمَآ اَنْزَلَ اِلَيْكَ اَنْزَلَهٗ بِعِلْمِهٖ ۚ وَالْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ يَشْهَدُوْنَ ۚ وَكَفٰى بِاللّٰهِ شَهِيْدًا ﴿١٦٦﴾

[167] Those who believe not and obstruct others in the way of God have assuredly gone far astray.

اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا وَصَدُّوْا عَنْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ قَدْ ضَلُّوْا ضَلٰلًاۢ بَعِيْدًا ﴿١٦٧﴾

[168] Verily those who believe not and go on doing wrong (till their death), God will not pardon them, nor show them a way out,

اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا وَظَلَمُوْا لَمْ يَكُنِ اللّٰهُ لِيَغْفِرَ لَهُمْ وَلَا لِيَهْدِيَهُمْ طَرِيْقًا ﴿١٦٨﴾

[169] Except the way of Hell to abide therein; and indeed this is easy for God.

اِلَّا طَرِيْقَ جَهَنَّمَ خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهَآ اَبَدًا ۚ وَكَانَ ذٰلِكَ عَلَى اللّٰهِ يَسِيْرًا ﴿١٦٩﴾

[170] O ye men! Now that an apostle hath come to you bearing the truth from your Lord, believe in him; it will be well for you; but if ye believe not, then, mark, that to God belongeth all that is in the heavens and in the earth, And God is All-knowing, the Wise.

يٰٓاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ جَآءَكُمُ الرَّسُوْلُ بِالْحَقِّ مِنْ رَّبِّكُمْ فَاٰمِنُوْا خَيْرًا لَّكُمْ ۚ وَاِنْ تَكْفُرُوْا فَاِنَّ لِلّٰهِ مَا فِى السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ ۚ وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ عَلِيْمًا حَكِيْمًا ﴿١٧٠﴾

One of the great weaknesses of the people of the Book was their excessive zeal in religious matters. When they thought of showing affection and respect for anyone, they went to the length of elevating him to the status of God Himself; and when they turned against him, they stooped so low as to condemn the very truth he upheld. Whenever they took to the way of piety, they did so with such inordinacy that they turned ascetic, and when they took to the way of worldliness, they lost themselves to every sense of good and evil. Such was the weakness which both the Jews and the Christians had developed. Speaking of the Christians in particular, the *Qur'ān* points out

that in their love and respect for Christ, they not only made of him the Son of God, but developed a definite doctrine of the Trinity—the Trinity of, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.

[171] O people of the Book! Do not be intemperate in the matter of religion; and of God speak nothing but truth. The Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, is but an apostle of God, and is (a manifestation of) the 'Word' which He inspired in Mary, and a Spirit from Him. Believe therefore in God and His apostle and call him not one of a Trinity. Forbear (calling him so) that it may be well for you. Verily God is only the One God worthy of devotion. He is too transcendent to have a son for Himself. His, all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth. And God is sufficient for a guardian (unto everything. He does not need a son to function for Him on the Earth).

يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتٰبِ لَا تَغْلُوْا فِيْ دِيْنِكُمْ
وَلَا تَقُوْلُوْا عَلَى اللّٰهِ إِلَّا الْحَقَّ إِنَّمَا
الْمَسِيْحُ عِيْسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ رَسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ
وَكَلِمَتُهٗ أَلْقٰهَا إِلٰى مَرْيَمَ وَرُوْحٌ
مِّنْهُ فَاٰمِنُوْا بِاللّٰهِ وَرُسُلِهٖ وَلَا
تَقُوْلُوْا ثَلٰثَةٌ اِنْتَهُوْا خَيْرًا لَّكُمْ
إِنَّمَا اللّٰهُ إِلٰهٌ وَّاحِدٌ سُبْحٰنَهٗ أَنْ
يَّكُوْنَ لَهٗ وَلَدٌ لَهٗ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ
وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَكَفٰى بِاللّٰهِ وَكِيْلًا ﴿١٧١﴾

Section 24

[172] The Messiah disdaineth not to style himself 'a servant of God', nor do the angels themselves disdain who are close to Him, and as for those who disdain to serve Him and are stiff-necked, the day is not far off when God will make them all to appear before Him.

لَنْ يَّسْتَنْكِفَ الْمَسِيْحُ أَنْ يَّكُوْنَ
عَبْدًا لِّلّٰهِ وَلَا الْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ الْمُقَرَّبُوْنَ
وَمَنْ يَّسْتَنْكِفْ عَنْ عِبَادَتِهٖ وَيَسْتَكْبِرْ
فَسَيَحْشُرُهُمْ إِلَيْهِ جَمِيْعًا ﴿١٧٢﴾

[173] Then, those who have believed and done things that are right, He will

فَأَمَّا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ

give them their wages in full and much more out of His bounty; but as for those who have been disdainful and stiff-necked, He will chastise them with a grievous chastisement;

فَيُوَفِّيهِمْ أُجُورَهُمْ وَيَزِيدُهُم مِّن فَضْلِهِ ۖ وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ اسْتَنكَفُوا وَاسْتَكْبَرُوا فَيُعَذِّبُهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿١٧٣﴾

[174] And these shall not find for themselves a friend or helper besides God.

وَلَا يَجِدُونَ لَهُم مِّن دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا ﴿١٧٤﴾

The religion of Truth is itself 'Proof positive', a perfect argument; and the *Qur'ān* is manifest light. Ignorance and conjecture cannot stand before a proof positive; and darkness cannot co-exist with light.

[175] O ye men! A proof hath already come to you from your Lord, and We have sent down to you a clear light.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ جَاءَكُم بُرْهَانٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَأَنزَلْنَا إِلَيْكُمْ نُورًا مُّبِينًا ﴿١٧٥﴾

[176] Wherefore, those who believe in God and cling to Him, soon will He cover them with His mercy and grace and draw them to Himself by the straight way.

فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَاعْتَصَمُوا بِهِ فَسَيُدْخِلُهُمْ فِي رَحْمَةٍ مِّنْهُ وَفَضْلٍ وَيَهْدِيهِمْ إِلَيْهِ صِرَاطًا مُّسْتَقِيمًا ﴿١٧٦﴾

The chapter had begun with a reference to rights and obligations among family members and kindred, and closes with a reference to the same subject.

[177] They ask for a ruling from thee. Say, God giveth you these directions in respect of one who has no lineal heirs. Should a man die childless but have a sister, she shall have one half of that which he hath left; but if a woman should die without an issue, her brother

يَسْتَفْتُونَكَ قُلِ اللَّهُ يُفْتِيكُمْ فِي الْكَلَالَةِ ۚ إِنِ امْرُؤٌ هَلَكَ لَيْسَ لَهُ وَلَدٌ وَلَهُ أُخْتٌ فَلَهَا نِصْفُ مَا تَرَكَ ۚ وَهُوَ يَرِثُهَا إِن لَّمْ يَكُن لَّهَا وَلَدٌ ۚ فَإِن كَانَتَا اثْنَتَيْنِ

shall be heir to her. But if there be two sisters, they shall then have two-thirds of what he hath left. If there be several brothers, and sisters, the male shall have as much as the share of two females. God hath thus made things clear to you that ye err not. And full well doth God know everything.

فَلَهُمَا الثُّلُثٰنِ مِمَّا تَرَكَ ۭ وَاِنْ كَانُوْٓا اِخْوَةً رِّجَالًا وَّنِسَاۗءً فَلِلذَّكَرِ مِثْلُ حَظِّ الْاُنْثَيَيْنِ ۭ يُبَيِّنُ اللّٰهُ لَكُمْ اَنْ تَضِلُّوْا ۭ وَاللّٰهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيْمٌ ۝١٧٦

CHAPTER V

THE FOOD — AL-MĀ'IDA

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate

O Muslim! Fulfil your engagements. Whatever resolves you have made to carry out the behests of God, carry them out with every sincerity. To be sincere is to do what is bidden, and abstain from what is forbidden.

Having made this general statement, the *Qur'ān* proceeds to deal, as occasion arises, with this subject of do's and dont's.

(1) The use of the flesh of all animals is made lawful with certain exceptions. In this connection, the Arabic word used for animals is *An'ām*. But this word in the context of the *Qur'ān* is confined to camels, kine, sheep and goats.

(2) When the pilgrim garb is put on for Hajj and 'Umra, one is stated to be in a state of pilgrimage; and in that state chasing in every form is prohibited.

(3) Do not make light of what are associated with devotion to God, and do not interfere with the ritual connected with them.

(4) Of these, there are certain months of the year, viz. 'Ziq'ada, Zilhajj, Muharram, and Rajab, which are regarded sacred, since it is during these months that the Hajj pilgrims travel. So, during this period do not indulge in warfare, nor cause harm of any kind to pilgrims or to their belongings. Of course, should the enemy waylay or attack you, you will necessarily have to defend yourselves, as commanded in verse 190 of Chapter II, 'Al-Baqarah'.

(5) Neither plunder animals of sacrifice which are brought to the city of Mecca nor cause harm to the pilgrims or merchants catering for them while attending to their devotional duties at Mecca. To cause harm to pilgrims is to show disrespect to the Holy House itself.

(6) The polytheists of Mecca had hitherto obstructed your passage to the Holy Mosque. Do not in the spirit of retaliation obstruct or attack any of them, should any of them proceed to the Holy House to perform the Hajj. The rule of behaviour with you should be to co-operate with one another in goodness and piety and to abstain from co-operation in sin and transgression. To proceed on Hajj is a goodly act, and it is not proper for any one to come in the way of goodness.

The rule laid down here is applicable to all activities of Muslims. The rule is: help every one who has to do a good deed, even if one is not a Muslim and is indeed an enemy. Likewise, do not offer assistance to any one who does a wrong thing, although he be a Muslim and indeed your comrade. The rule further makes it clear that even if an idolater is engaged in an act of devotion in his own way, do not disturb or show any disrespect to him; for whatever the form of devotion, it is devotion to God Himself.

In verse 3, the *Qur'ān* announces the final fulfilment of a divine promise, for, it may be recalled that in Chapter II, Al-Baqarah, verse 128, the *Qur'ān* had reproduced Abraham's prayer to God to raise from his progeny a generation devoted to God in absolute resignation to Him and also God's promise to fulfil the prayer. In verse 3 of the present chapter, it is clearly affirmed that the favour asked of God is now fulfilled in as much as, a generation of his progeny, even as Abraham had yearned for, has now taken its rise.

This revelation came to the Prophet on the occasion of his farewell visit to the Ka'aba, some three months before the Prophet passed away.

سُورَةُ الْمَآئِدَةِ مَدَنِيَّةٌ وَّهِيَ مِائَةٌ وَّعِشْرُونَ آيَةً وَّسِتَّةَ عَشَرَ رُكُوعًا

SECTION 1

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

[1] O ye Muslim! Fulfil your engagements. Made lawful for you (for food) are animals that graze excepting those which will (presently) be mentioned, provided you do not obtain them as

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْٓا اَوْفُوْا بِالْعُقُوْدِ ۭ اُحِلَّتْ لَكُمْ بَهِيْمَةُ الْاَنْعَامِ اِلَّا مَا يُتْلٰى عَلَيْكُمْ غَيْرَ مُحِلِّي الصَّيْدِ

game in the state of pilgrimage. Verily God ordains what He deems proper.

وَأَنتُمْ حُرُمٌ ط إِنَّ اللّٰهَ يَحْكُمُ مَا
يُرِيدُ ①

[2] O ye Muslims! Do not show disrespect to the signs of devotion to God, or make light of the sanctity of the sacred month, or of the sacrificial animals having garlands around their necks, and do not ill-treat those who have set out for the Holy House to seek the favour[1] of their Lord and His pleasure. And when the pilgrimage is over (and the pilgrim's garb is removed) you may take to the chase. And let not the thought of any body of people having harassed you on your way to the Holy Mosque induce you to indulge in excesses towards them. Co-operate one with another in goodness and piety and do not co-operate in sin and transgression, and avoid the displeasure of God, for, God is strict in dealing out chastisement.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تُحِلُّوا شَعَائِرَ
اللّٰهِ وَلَا الشَّهْرَ الْحَرَامَ وَلَا الْهَدْيَ وَلَا
الْقَلَائِدَ وَلَا آمِّينَ الْبَيْتَ الْحَرَامَ
يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَرِضْوَانًا ط
وَإِذَا حَلَلْتُمْ فَاصْطَادُوا ط وَلَا
يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَآنُ قَوْمٍ أَن صَدُّوكُمْ
عَنِ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ أَن تَعْتَدُوا م
وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ ص
وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَ
الْعُدْوَانِ ص وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ ط إِنَّ
اللّٰهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ②

[3] (O Muslims) Forbidden to you are (the following): Carrion, and blood and swine's flesh and whatever that hath been sacrificed in the name of any other than God, and also the strangled and that which is killed by a blow or a fall or by goring and anything

حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةُ وَالدَّمُ وَ
لَحْمُ الْخِنزِيرِ وَمَا أُهِلَّ لِغَيْرِ اللّٰهِ
بِهِ وَالْمُنْخَنِقَةُ وَالْمَوْقُوذَةُ وَالْمُتَرَدِّيَةُ

[1] The *Qur'ān* uses the term *Fazl* to mean 'favour' which in the context of this verse means wealth, and covers also the means such as trade and commerce which produce it and in which the pilgrims might be engaged.

that hath been partaken of by a beast of prey unless you have slain it in due form before its death and that which hath been slain on any altar and also that which has been apportioned by means of divining arrows (as was the practice among the polytheists of Mecca). All this is evil. (O Muslims) now (that this order of prohibition is promulgated), the unbelievers have given up the hope (of turning you) from your faith; but (now if they go against you) fear them not; fear Me (my displeasure). This day have I completed for you your religion, and thus have filled up the measure of My favours on you and have been pleased to assign for you Islam as your religion. (Know) then that to him who is driven by hunger (to partake of anything forbidden) without being wilfully inclined to sin, to him, verily will God be indulgent, merciful.

وَالنَّطِيحَةُ وَمَا أَكَلَ السَّبُعُ إِلَّا مَا
ذَكَّيْتُمْ وَمَا ذُبِحَ عَلَى النُّصُبِ
وَأَنْ تَسْتَقْسِمُوا بِالْأَزْلَامِ ذَٰلِكُمْ
فِسْقٌ ۗ الْيَوْمَ يَئِسَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
مِنْ دِينِكُمْ فَلَا تَخْشَوْهُمْ وَاخْشَوْنِ ۚ
الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَ
أَتْمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ
لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا ۚ فَمَنِ اضْطُرَّ
فِي مَخْمَصَةٍ غَيْرَ مُتَجَانِفٍ لِإِثْمٍ ۙ
فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ۝٣

The reference to the completion of the favour of Divine message made here in connection with the subject of the permissible and the impermissible is because till now restrictions in force among the people of Prophet's time in matters of food and drink were so oppressively strict that it became the aim of Islam to do away with all unnatural obstacles to life and rid the human mind of every element of rabid superstition. Hence the *Qur'ān* had to declare that by restoring normalcy in human behaviour, life prescribed for Muslims was made complete. They no longer had to bear unnecessary hardships. If a man

was dying of hunger and in that condition had no access to lawful food, he was allowed to save his life by partaking of that which in other circumstances was prohibited for food. The fact was that people were so attuned to hard restrictions in food that they used to ask the Prophet repeatedly what exactly was lawful to them as food. In reply, the *Qur'ān* declared that all wholesome things were lawful, save those which were hurtful to life or repugnant to the sense of human decency.

In this connection it is to be stated that a game caught by a trained dog or a trianed bird is regarded as lawful food provided the trained dog or bird is set free to pursue the game by pronouncing the name of God over the venture even as you do when slaying some thing for food.

In the same spirit, it is permissible to partake of the food prepared by one following a revealed religion, or the animal or bird slain by him. Incidentally it is also made clear here that marriage with a woman professing any revealed religion is not prohibited.

[4] They ask thee (O Prophet) what is made lawful for them. Say! Lawful to you are all wholesome things. And eat also (the flesh of the animal) which beasts of prey seize for you—beasts of prey whom you have trained as directed to you by God. You may pronounce the name of God over it, and fear (to go against the instructions of) God. Verily, swift is God in reckoning.

يَسْـَٔلُونَكَ مَاذَآ أُحِلَّ لَهُمْ ۖ قُلْ أُحِلَّ لَكُمُ ٱلطَّيِّبَٰتُ ۙ وَمَا عَلَّمْتُم مِّنَ ٱلْجَوَارِحِ مُكَلِّبِينَ تُعَلِّمُونَهُنَّ مِمَّا عَلَّمَكُمُ ٱللَّهُ ۖ فَكُلُوا۟ مِمَّآ أَمْسَكْنَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَٱذْكُرُوا۟ ٱسْمَ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ ۖ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَرِيعُ ٱلْحِسَابِ ④

[5] This day (hath the programme or religion been given its final touches, so much so, that) every wholesome thing has now been made lawful to you, (and every unnatural

ٱلْيَوْمَ أُحِلَّ لَكُمُ ٱلطَّيِّبَٰتُ ۖ وَطَعَامُ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ حِلٌّ لَّكُمْ وَطَعَامُكُمْ حِلٌّ لَّهُمْ ۖ وَٱلْمُحْصَنَٰتُ

restriction in the matter of food is removed). Lawful to you is the food prepared by those who have received the scriptures, and lawful to them is the food that you prepare. And lawful to you are chaste believing women and the chaste women from among those who have received the Book before you, provided you give them their dowers, and enter into wedlock with them with no thought of mere sexual satisfaction or of keeping them as concubines. Vain is the work of him who renounces the Faith; and in the life hereafter, he shall be of those who have suffered loss.

مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنٰتِ وَالْمُحْصَنٰتُ مِنَ الَّذِيْنَ اُوْتُوا الْكِتٰبَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ اِذَآ اٰتَيْتُمُوْهُنَّ اُجُوْرَهُنَّ مُحْصِنِيْنَ غَيْرَ مُسٰفِحِيْنَ وَلَا مُتَّخِذِيْٓ اَخْدَانٍ ؕ وَمَنْ يَّكْفُرْ بِالْاِيْمَانِ فَقَدْ حَبِطَ عَمَلُهٗ ؗ وَهُوَ فِي الْاٰخِرَةِ مِنَ الْخٰسِرِيْنَ ۝

Section 2

The Ordinance of Ablutions

In respect of ablutions, observes the *Qur'ān*: "God doth not desire to impose on you hardship." In other words, God doth not subject you to unnecessary restrictions in respect of ablutions. The real object, in the words of the *Qur'ān*, is this: He only careth to keep you clean in order that He might (develop you into a civilised community) and fill up the measure of His favour on you.

[6] O ye Muslims! When you have to perform your prayer, wash your faces and your hands upto the elbows and wipe your heads and (wash) your feet upto the ankles. If you have had a seminal discharge, then take a full bath. But if ye

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْٓا اِذَا قُمْتُمْ اِلَى الصَّلٰوةِ فَاغْسِلُوْا وُجُوْهَكُمْ وَاَيْدِيَكُمْ اِلَى الْمَرَافِقِ وَامْسَحُوْا بِرُءُوْسِكُمْ وَاَرْجُلَكُمْ اِلَى الْكَعْبَيْنِ ؕ

be sick (and the use of water is hurtful to you) or you are on a journey (and you have no easy access to water) or have had a call of nature, or have touched a woman (through sexual attraction) and ye find no water, then seek some clean soil and rub with it your faces and your hands. God doth not desire to impose on you hardships: He only careth to keep you clean, in order that He might fill up the measure of His favour on you that you may be grateful.

وَإِن كُنتُمْ جُنُبًا فَاطَّهَّرُوا ۚ وَإِن كُنتُم مَّرْضَىٰ
أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ أَوْ جَاءَ أَحَدٌ مِّنكُم مِّنَ
الْغَائِطِ أَوْ لَامَسْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَلَمْ
تَجِدُوا مَاءً فَتَيَمَّمُوا صَعِيدًا طَيِّبًا
فَامْسَحُوا بِوُجُوهِكُمْ وَأَيْدِيكُم مِّنْهُ ۚ
مَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيَجْعَلَ عَلَيْكُم مِّنْ حَرَجٍ
وَلَٰكِن يُرِيدُ لِيُطَهِّرَكُمْ وَلِيُتِمَّ
نِعْمَتَهُ عَلَيْكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ⑥

The chapter began with the rider: "Fulfil your engagements" or the promises which you had made to carry out divine injunctions scrupulously. The *Qur'ān* reminds you in the following verses of the promises thus made. It points out that now that final touches have been given to the programme of life envisaged for you and the divine favour promised to you is thus completed, it is up to you to be ever mindful of this favour and to engage yourselves strenuously and in perfect sincerity in the service of Truth.

The *Qur'ān* points out further that the divine purpose implicit in the favour shown demands that you should become embodiments of truth and justice. You are now to present yourselves to the world at large as upholders of justice for the sake of God, by being fair and just in all your dealings whether with friends or foes, or with kinsfolk or strangers, and to speak nothing but truth in all circumstances.

[7] And call to mind the favour shown to you by God and the definite promise which you had

وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَمِيثَاقَهُ

made to Him saying: "We have heard, and we will obey"; and be mindful of God, (fear the consequences of disobeying Him). Verily, God knoweth well what is harboured in the (human) breasts.

الَّذِي وَاثَقَكُم بِهِ إِذْ قُلْتُمْ سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ ۝٧

[8] O ye Muslims! For the sake of God, stand up to uphold justice and let not ill-will towards any people impel you to deviate from justice. Act justly. This indeed is akin to piety. Be mindful of God; for, assuredly, He knoweth all that you do.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ لِلَّهِ شُهَدَاءَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَآنُ قَوْمٍ عَلَىٰ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا اعْدِلُوا هُوَ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ۝٨

[9] God hath held out His promise to those who believe and do that which is right, and for them there shall be forgiveness and a great reward.

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَهُم مَّغْفِرَةٌ وَأَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ ۝٩

[10] But those who have wilfully rejected the Faith and treated lightly our revelations—these shall be companions of fire.

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَحِيمِ ۝١٠

[11] O ye Muslims! Recollect the favour of God shown to you on the occasion when certain people (who had preferred the path of ruin to that of salvation) were bent on acting high-handedly against you. It was He who held back their hands from you. Be mindful then of God, and in God let the faithful repose their trust.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ هَمَّ قَوْمٌ أَن يَبْسُطُوا إِلَيْكُمْ أَيْدِيَهُمْ فَكَفَّ أَيْدِيَهُمْ عَنكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ۝١١

SECTION 3

The *Qur'ān* now turns to the people of the Book, the Jews and the Christians, in order that the Muslims may grow heedful in respect of their own behaviour. Even as in your case, God had received a promise from the children of Israel, but it so happened that they took the path of disobedience. Beware, lest you too follow their line of action.

[12] Surely, God took a promise from the Israelites and raised up from among them twelve leaders and said: "Truly I am with you if ye observe prayer and pay the poor-due and have faith in My apostles and give them assistance and lend God a liberal loan; (by helping the poor for the sake of God). I will assuredly remove from you your weaknesses and will bring you into gardens wherein streams flow. But whoever turneth back after this, he hath indeed drifted away from the right path" (the path of success in life).

ولقد أخذ الله ميثاق بني إسرائيل
وبعثنا منهم اثني عشر نقيبا وقال
الله إني معكم لئن أقمتم الصلوة
وآتيتم الزكوة وآمنتم برسلي و
عزرتموهم وأقرضتم الله قرضا
حسنا لأكفرن عنكم سيئاتكم و
لأدخلنكم جنت تجري من تحتها
الأنهر فمن كفر بعد ذلك منكم
فقد ضل سواء السبيل ﴿١٢﴾

The practice with the Jewish priests was to exploit the Book of God so as to subserve its provisions to their own way of thought and their own selfish desires. They interpreted the verses as they liked and thus did they distort the actual meaning of the original.

Several occasions arose in the time of the Prophet when this behaviour of the Jewish priests was exposed.

[13] Then, for their having broken the covenant, We disowned them, and hardened their hearts, (since

فبما نقضهم ميثاقهم لعنهم وجعلنا

قُلُوبَهُمْ قَٰسِيَةً ۖ يُحَرِّفُونَ ٱلْكَلِمَ عَن مَّوَاضِعِهِۦ ۙ وَنَسُوا۟ حَظًّا مِّمَّا ذُكِّرُوا۟ بِهِۦ ۚ وَلَا تَزَالُ تَطَّلِعُ عَلَىٰ خَآئِنَةٍ مِّنْهُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِّنْهُمْ ۖ فَٱعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَٱصْفَحْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٣﴾

the Law of life designed by God is that when any one discards the path of truth, he indeed denies himself the blessings thereof and deadens his sense of responding to anything good). They have therefore tampered with the phraseology of the Divine scripture and have neglected to profit even slightly by what was commended to them. Barring a few instances, thou wilt (O Prophet) always find them indulge in dishonesty. So, forbear and overlook; verily God loveth those who act kindly.

Even the Christians have neglected to fulfil their covenant with God and strayed away from the right path. They have divided themselves into numerous sects, each hostile to every other. So acute is the hostility among them that it hardly promises ever to terminate. This is borne out by the history of Christianity. For centuries together, its various sects have remained hostile to each other. This hostility has now assumed the form of political and economic rivalry more dreadful in its reaches than its earlier form.

The *Qur'ān* has drawn the attention of the Muslims lest there should be any such developments among them. But the tragedy of Islam is that it has had, in the course of its history, to court a like fate.

وَمِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّا نَصَٰرَىٰٓ أَخَذْنَا

[14] And of those also who say: "We are Nazarenes",[1] have We taken a promise. But they too have neg-

[1] When Christianity first came to Rome, its followers were named Nazarenes by the Romans. This was the name by which the Christians were known among the Arabs at the time of the Prophet and this was the name which the Christians of the time had adopted for themselves, so much so that the *Qur'ān* refers to them in the same term wherever it refers to the Christians in its text.

lected to profit even slightly by what was commended to them, (to live together as a compact community). Wherefore have We aroused enmity and spite between them which shall last till the day of Resurrection and it will not be long before God will let them know what they were doing.

مِيثَاقَهُمْ فَنَسُوا حَظًّا مِّمَّا ذُكِّرُوا
بِهِ فَأَغْرَيْنَا بَيْنَهُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ وَالْبَغْضَاءَ
إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ ۚ وَسَوْفَ يُنَبِّئُهُمُ اللَّهُ
بِمَا كَانُوا يَصْنَعُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

The aim of the *Qur'ān* is to bring its followers from darkness into light and dispel their ignorance, and afford them the blessings of knowledge and insight. Therefore it expects of its followers to adhere sincerely to the path of life indicated by it, since that is the path along which knowledge and insight are gathered.

[15] O People of the Scriptures! Now hath Our apostle come to you to make clear to you much that you were won't to conceal from out of the Scriptures, and also to pass over many things.

[16] Now a light hath assuredly come to you from God and a Book of illumination.

By which He will guide those who shall seek His pleasure to paths of peace, and will even, as He likes, bring them out of darkness into light and direct them to the straight path (of success in life).

يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولُنَا
يُبَيِّنُ لَكُمْ كَثِيرًا مِّمَّا كُنتُمْ تُخْفُونَ
مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَيَعْفُو عَن كَثِيرٍ ۚ قَدْ
جَاءَكُم مِّنَ اللَّهِ نُورٌ وَكِتَابٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٥﴾
يَهْدِي بِهِ اللَّهُ مَنِ اتَّبَعَ رِضْوَانَهُ
سُبُلَ السَّلَامِ وَيُخْرِجُهُم مِّنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى
النُّورِ بِإِذْنِهِ وَيَهْدِيهِمْ إِلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿١٦﴾

The Christian doctrine of the Divinity of Christ.

[17] They indeed commit blasphemy who say that the Messiah, son of

لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ

Mary, is God indeed. Say: Who could had overruled God had He chosen to destroy the Messiah, son of Mary, and his mother and all who were on the earth ? To God alone belongeth dominion over the heavens and the earth and all that is between. He brings in to being what He willeth, and God hath power over everything.

الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ قُلْ فَمَنْ يَمْلِكُ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا إِنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يُهْلِكَ الْمَسِيحَ ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ وَأُمَّهُ وَمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا وَلِلَّهِ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١٧﴾

The Jews and the Christians entertain an erroneous belie that they are the children of God and that despite all the wrong they might do, they are sure to attain salvation (Q:2:80, and Q:3:24).

Christ (peace on Him!) had replaced the Judaic concept of God as 'God of terror' by 'God of love'. Hence he very often addressed God as 'Father,' and emphasised that ritual and formality were of no consequence in religion, if they did not denote goodness and goodwill towards others. But his followers took undue advantage of his description of God. They asserted that faith in the atonement of Christ guaranteed their redemption, and so they thought that in as much as God was their 'Father,' He would never close to them, His own children, the door to the Kingdom of Heaven.

The *Qur'ān* replies to this vain assertion. It states emphatically that God never gave to any particular community a free passport to Heaven. It states that the Christians and the Jews are human beings as others, and that the grant of salvation lies entirely with God.

[18] The Jews and the Christians say: "We are the sons of God and are the loved of Him, (and that notwithstanding what we might do, salvation is ours)." Say: "Why

وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ وَالنَّصَارَىٰ نَحْنُ أَبْنَاءُ اللَّهِ وَأَحِبَّاؤُهُ قُلْ فَلِمَ يُعَذِّبُكُمْ

then doth He chastise you for your sins (in this world from time to time? Even you admit this. In fact your very Scripture is replete with accounts of your short-comings and your sufferings). Nay! Ye are but as other men whom He hath created. He pardoneth whom He pleaseth and chastiseth whom He pleaseth (in accordance with His Law of requital). And God's is the dominion over the heavens and the earth and all that is between, and to Him alone everything returns.

بِذُنُوبِكُمْ ۖ بَلْ أَنتُم بَشَرٌ مِّمَّنْ خَلَقَ ۚ يَغْفِرُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَن يَشَاءُ ۚ وَلِلَّهِ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا ۖ وَإِلَيْهِ الْمَصِيرُ ﴿١٨﴾

[19] O People of the Book! Now Our apostle hath come to you to break the lapse of time in the advent of Prophets lest you should say: "There hath come to us no bearer of good tidings or any warner." Now hath come to you a bearer of good tidings and a warner, (and you have now no excuse to cover your short-coming) and God hath power over everything.

يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولُنَا يُبَيِّنُ لَكُمْ عَلَىٰ فَتْرَةٍ مِّنَ الرُّسُلِ أَن تَقُولُوا مَا جَاءَنَا مِن بَشِيرٍ وَلَا نَذِيرٍ ۖ فَقَدْ جَاءَكُم بَشِيرٌ وَنَذِيرٌ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١٩﴾

SECTION 4

When a community has remained in a state of bondage for over a long time, it loses the will to strive for high purposes. It finds contentment in slavery, no matter what humiliation and frustration it denotes, and fights shy of making high resolves, however fruitful such resolves might portend.

This was the state of affairs with the Israelites. They had lost all urge to better their condition. Timidity and weak-

mindedness had taken hold of them, so much so that when Moses called upon them to enter Can'an, their promised land, they said: "Therein live powerful oppressors, and we have not the strength to face them. We surely cannot get in there till they are out of it." Their scripture, the *Torah*, gives the sad picture of their predicament. Frightened of a struggle with their oppressors, they felt so helpless that they bewailed, "O God! why didst Thou bring us out of Egypt? Is it only to fall by the sword of the Can'anites?" They therefore resolved to desert Moses and go back to Egypt. (*Numbers* 13 and 14.)

Thereupon the Divine decree was issued forth that they should stay on for forty years in the wilderness of Sinai. The idea underlying this decree was that the Israelites who had come out of Egypt having grown attuned to slavery should disappear and a fresh race should rise after them to grow in the free atmosphere of a wilderness; the result was that even as anticipated, a new race of Isrealites came into being who eventually succeeded in taking possession of the promised land.

[20] Call to mind the time when Moses addressed his people: "O my people! Remember the favour of God shown to you by raising prophets among you and giving you a sovereign status, and what had never been given before to any other people, (the privileges both of prophethood and kingship).

وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِۦ يَـٰقَوْمِ ٱذْكُرُوا۟ نِعْمَةَ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ جَعَلَ فِيكُمْ أَنۢبِيَآءَ وَجَعَلَكُم مُّلُوكًا وَءَاتَىٰكُم مَّا لَمْ يُؤْتِ أَحَدًا مِّنَ ٱلْعَـٰلَمِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾

[21] O my people! Enter boldly and with high resolves the holy land which God hath assigned to you, and turn not back lest ye turn losers."

يَـٰقَوْمِ ٱدْخُلُوا۟ ٱلْأَرْضَ ٱلْمُقَدَّسَةَ ٱلَّتِى كَتَبَ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَلَا تَرْتَدُّوا۟ عَلَىٰٓ أَدْبَارِكُمْ فَتَنقَلِبُوا۟ خَـٰسِرِينَ ﴿٢١﴾

[22] They said: "O Moses! therein live powerful oppressors, (we have not the strength

قَالُوا۟ يَـٰمُوسَىٰٓ إِنَّ فِيهَا قَوْمًا جَبَّارِينَ ۖ

to face them). Surely we cannot get therein till they are out of it; but if they go forth from it, we will assuredly enter in."

وَإِنَّا لَن نَّدْخُلَهَا حَتَّىٰ يَخْرُجُوا مِنْهَا فَإِن يَخْرُجُوا مِنْهَا فَإِنَّا دَاخِلُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

[23] Whereupon two God-fearing[1] men among them favoured of God said: (Why do you feel so timid and weak). "Enter in upon them by the gate and when you once enter, victory is yours.

And lay your trust in God if indeed ye are men of faith."

قَالَ رَجُلَانِ مِنَ الَّذِينَ يَخَافُونَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمَا ادْخُلُوا عَلَيْهِمُ الْبَابَ فَإِذَا دَخَلْتُمُوهُ فَإِنَّكُمْ غَالِبُونَ وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَتَوَكَّلُوا إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢٣﴾

[24] They said: "O Moses! Never shall we enter while they remain there. (If you are intent on going forth), Go thou and thy Lord and fight you two together. On our part, we will sit us down here."

قَالُوا يَا مُوسَىٰ إِنَّا لَن نَّدْخُلَهَا أَبَدًا مَّا دَامُوا فِيهَا فَاذْهَبْ أَنتَ وَرَبُّكَ فَقَاتِلَا إِنَّا هَاهُنَا قَاعِدُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

[25] (Saddened at this situation) exclaimed Moses: "My Lord! I have no authority over anyone except myself and my brother. Do thou decide between us and this unruly people."

قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي لَا أَمْلِكُ إِلَّا نَفْسِي وَأَخِي فَافْرُقْ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَ الْقَوْمِ الْفَاسِقِينَ ﴿٢٥﴾

[26] He said: "Then they shall not have it for forty years. They shall wander in the wilderness in utter distraction. Fret not thyself therefore for this unruly folk."

قَالَ فَإِنَّهَا مُحَرَّمَةٌ عَلَيْهِمْ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً يَتِيهُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَلَا تَأْسَ عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْفَاسِقِينَ ﴿٢٦﴾

[1] The two persons referred to here are named Joshua and Caleb in the *Torah*. (Number 14).

Section 5

The Israelites had grown very hard-hearted in their dealings among themselves and with others. In this connection the story of the two sons of Adam is narrated—(Abel and Cain: Genesis 4) known among the Arabs as Habil and Qabil.

Abel was a man of piety. Said he to his brother Cain: "Thou mayest stretch forth thy hand against me to slay me: I shall surely not stretch forth my hand against thee to slay thee. Surely I shudder to displease God, the Lord of all creation."

Nevertheless Cain slew his brother.

The voice of Abel was truly the voice of humanity, in favour of up-holding the cause of truth and goodness in life, whereas in the action of Cain the hand of tyranny of man over man was at work. The event thus opened before humanity two paths, making it clear that by following the path of goodness and truth, man can never soil his hand with blood and that by following the other path, the path of tyranny, the hand of the tyrant will always be smeared with blood.

The *Qur'ān* states that it was why God had given a warning to the Israelites: "If one slayeth another for other than manslaughter, it shall be as if he hath slain all mankind. But if one saveth the life of a single person, it shall be as if he hath saved the life of all mankind." The life of one human being is linked with that of every other and he who has not shown kindliness to another person, hath indeed denied kindliness to all humanity.

The Talmud states that he who has saved the life of one individual, he, indeed, will be regarded as having saved the life of the entire Universe, and he who hath taken the life of one, to him will be meted out a punishment such as shall be meted out to him who hath taken the life of the entire Universe.

But the Israelites disregarded this admonition and although prophets came to them one after another to dissuade them from their evil behaviour, the hands of the Israelites remained smeared with the blood of their brethren.

[27] Relate to them in due form the story of the two sons of Adam, who had offered each an offering (to God). The offering of one of them (Abel) was accepted, and the offering of the other (Cain) was not accepted; whereupon Cain out of spite said to Abel: "I will surely slay thee." Replied the other: "God accepteth only from the God-fearing. (How am I to blame if thy offering is not accepted?)

وَاتْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ ابْنَيْ آدَمَ بِالْحَقِّ إِذْ قَرَّبَا قُرْبَانًا فَتُقُبِّلَ مِنْ أَحَدِهِمَا وَلَمْ يُتَقَبَّلْ مِنَ الْآخَرِ قَالَ لَأَقْتُلَنَّكَ ۖ قَالَ إِنَّمَا يَتَقَبَّلُ اللَّهُ مِنَ الْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٢٧﴾

[28] "Thou mayest stretch forth thy hand against me to slay me; I shall surely not stretch forth my hand against thee to slay thee. Truly, I shudder to displease God, the Lord of all creation.

لَئِنْ بَسَطْتَ إِلَيَّ يَدَكَ لِتَقْتُلَنِي مَا أَنَا بِبَاسِطٍ يَدِيَ إِلَيْكَ لِأَقْتُلَكَ ۖ إِنِّي أَخَافُ اللَّهَ رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٢٨﴾

[29] "Indeed, you may bear the sin against me along with thy (previous) sins and be of the companions of Fire, for that is the recompense of the unjust."

إِنِّي أُرِيدُ أَنْ تَبُوءَ بِإِثْمِي وَإِثْمِكَ فَتَكُونَ مِنْ أَصْحَابِ النَّارِ ۚ وَذَٰلِكَ جَزَاءُ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾

[30] And he (Cain) made up his mind to slay his brother, and he did slay him, and thus he was counted among the oppressors.

فَطَوَّعَتْ لَهُ نَفْسُهُ قَتْلَ أَخِيهِ فَقَتَلَهُ فَأَصْبَحَ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ﴿٣٠﴾

[31] Then God did send a crow which scratched the ground to show him how he might hide the corpse of his brother. "Woe is me" said he, "have I become so low that this crow should show the way to hide the corpse of my brother!" (So when this dawned on him), he deeply felt ashamed of himself.

فَبَعَثَ اللَّهُ غُرَابًا يَبْحَثُ فِي الْأَرْضِ لِيُرِيَهُ كَيْفَ يُوَارِي سَوْأَةَ أَخِيهِ ۚ قَالَ يَا وَيْلَتَا أَعَجَزْتُ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِثْلَ هَٰذَا الْغُرَابِ فَأُوَارِيَ سَوْأَةَ أَخِي ۖ فَأَصْبَحَ مِنَ النَّادِمِينَ ﴿٣١﴾

[32] So it was that We laid down for the Israelites that if one slayeth another for other than manslaughter or for spreading disorder in the land, it shall be as if he hath slain all mankind. But if one saveth the life of a single person, it shall be as if he hath saved the life of all mankind. Our apostles have already come to them with clear proofs (of their mission and tried to dissuade them from their evil behaviour), and yet many of them there were who nevertheless went on committing excesses in the land.

مِنْ أَجْلِ ذَٰلِكَ كَتَبْنَا عَلَىٰ بَنِيٓ
إِسْرَآءِيلَ أَنَّهُ مَنْ قَتَلَ نَفْسًا بِغَيْرِ
نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَكَأَنَّمَا
قَتَلَ النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا ؕ وَمَنْ أَحْيَاهَا
فَكَأَنَّمَآ أَحْيَا النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا ؕ وَلَقَدْ
جَآءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُنَا بِالْبَيِّنٰتِ ثُمَّ إِنَّ
كَثِيرًا مِّنْهُمْ بَعْدَ ذٰلِكَ فِي الْأَرْضِ
لَمُسْرِفُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾

وقف النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم

Punishment of rebels and those who waylay

Do not proceed against the criminal if he has repented and made amends before you have him in your power.

In the previous verse, reference is made to punishment for manslaughter and for creating disorder in the land. Here in this verse the details are given.

It is to be noted that the *Qur'ān* with a view to preventing crime on a large scale, enjoins strict punishment for certain offences such as treason, manslaughter and highway robbery, but takes care to emphasise side by side, as in the very next verse, that the punishment meted out should not degenerate into wilful excess as that will be displeasing to God.

[33] The treatment meted out to those who rise against God and his Apostle and go about spreading disorder in the land is naught but that they should be slain or crucified or have their alternate hands and feet cut off

إِنَّمَا جَزٰٓؤُا الَّذِينَ يُحَارِبُونَ اللّٰهَ وَ
رَسُولَهُ وَيَسْعَوْنَ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَسَادًا
أَنْ يُّقَتَّلُوٓا أَوْ يُصَلَّبُوٓا أَوْ تُقَطَّعَ أَيْدِيهِمْ
وَأَرْجُلُهُمْ مِّنْ خِلَافٍ أَوْ يُنْفَوْا

or be banished from the land (in accordance with the crime committed). There is for them disgrace in this world and in the next, severe chastisement,

مِنَ الْأَرْضِ ذٰلِكَ لَهُمْ خِزْيٌ فِي الدُّنْيَا
وَلَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٣٣﴾

[34] Excepting those, who shall have repented before you have them in your power. Know that God is Forgiving, the Merciful.

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَقْدِرُوا
عَلَيْهِمْ فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٣٤﴾ ع

SECTION 6

[35] O Muslims! Be mindful of God (and fear the consequence of disobeying Him) and seek means of approach to Him and strive earnestly in His path that it may be well with you.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَابْتَغُوا
إِلَيْهِ الْوَسِيلَةَ وَجَاهِدُوا فِي سَبِيلِهِ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

[36] Even if those who have rejected the faith ever possess all that is in the earth and as much again, and offer this as a ransom on the Day of Resurrection to save themselves from chastisement, it will not be accepted from them; and for them there shall be a severe chastisement.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْ أَنَّ لَهُمْ مَا
فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا وَمِثْلَهُ مَعَهُ
لِيَفْتَدُوا بِهِ مِنْ عَذَابِ يَوْمِ
الْقِيَامَةِ مَا تُقُبِّلَ مِنْهُمْ وَلَهُمْ
عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٣٦﴾

[37] Fain would they come forth from the Fire; but come forth from it they shall not; and for them, there shall be an abiding chastisement.

يُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يَخْرُجُوا مِنَ النَّارِ وَمَا هُمْ
بِخَارِجِينَ مِنْهَا وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُقِيمٌ ﴿٣٧﴾

The cutting off of hands of thieves:

[38] Whether a thief be a man or a woman, cut off his or her

وَالسَّارِقُ وَالسَّارِقَةُ فَاقْطَعُوا

hand as a punishment from God for what one hath done. And God is powerful; He ordains everything wisely.

أَيْدِيَهُمَا جَزَآءًۢ بِمَا كَسَبَا نَكَالًا مِّنَ
اللَّهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٣٨﴾

[39] But he who shall repent after his transgression and amend, then verily God will turn to Him in forgiveness. God indeed is Forgiving, the Merciful.

فَمَن تَابَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ ظُلْمِهِۦ وَأَصْلَحَ
فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يَتُوبُ عَلَيْهِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٣٩﴾

[40] Knowest thou not that God's is the dominion over the heavens and the earth? He chastiseth whom He will and whom He will He forgiveth. And God hath power over all things.

أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ لَهُۥ مُلْكُ السَّمَٰوَٰتِ
وَالْأَرْضِ يُعَذِّبُ مَن يَشَآءُ وَيَغْفِرُ
لِمَن يَشَآءُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٤٠﴾

Eavesdropping, backbiting and tale-bearing are not the qualities which can co-exist with truth and uprightness.

The Jewish doctors of law used to send their agents to attend gatherings where the Prophet of Islam preached, to give them reports of what he had said and done in those gatherings. These agents were tutored to put inconvenient questions to the Prophet on controversial subjects and to note what replies he would offer. Should his opinion conform to the teachings of their scriptures, they were to agree with him; else not. But the difficulty was that the Jewish doctors of law never stated things straight. They recklessly tampered with the text of their scripture and gave interpretations which were at variance with the meaning of the original.

The *Torah* prescribes stoning for adultery and fornication, and slaying for the slayer. But to absolve influential people who committed crimes, the Jewish doctors of law gave specious interpretations of law. In the time of the Prophet, a glaring instance of this occurred.

They contended that the Prophet of Islam did not have any knowledge of Jewish law, and fancied that since he had brought a new law with him, he would not take decisions under the Jewish law. So they held that cases of this description had

better be placed before him, so that the criminal might go scotfree and they would not be held responsible for the result. So a case like this had to be decided by the Prophet. He was, however, cautioned by a revelation, and he made them state the exact Jewish law and his decision was given in accordance with it.

It is this incident that is referred to in the following passage. The *Qur'ān* states that the Jews had their own law provided by the *Torah* and had therefore no valid reason to refer their cases to him. The *Qur'ān* points out why these doctors of law did this. This was because the accused were men of influence or were those who had bribed the doctors of law to save them from the rigours of the Jewish law. But this behaviour on their part made it clear that they had no faith in their own law. Were they true believers therein, they would have upheld its provisions in a straightforward manner.

The *Qur'ān* then goes on to make it clear that the law of God was first delivered through the *Torah*. This was confirmed by the *Evangel*. The *Qur'ān* was delivered to confirm and give final recognition to all that had been delivered before and to be a guardian over it. Had the *Qur'ān* not been delivered, all law ever delivered before would have, through wilful tampering, been suppressed altogether.

The commandment of the *Torah* referred to in verse 45 is mentioned in *Exodus* 22:24 & 19:21.

[41] O Apostle! Let not those grieve thee who hasten towards unbelief, whether they be of those who with their tongues avow: "We believe", but who in their hearts believe not, or from amongst the Jews, eavesdroppers for others who come not to thee, eavesdropping just to coin lies. They tamper with the phraseology of the Scriptures and say, "If ye

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الرَّسُوْلُ لَا يَحْزُنْكَ الَّذِيْنَ
يُسَارِعُوْنَ فِي الْكُفْرِ مِنَ الَّذِيْنَ
قَالُوْٓا اٰمَنَّا بِاَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَلَمْ تُؤْمِنْ
قُلُوْبُهُمْ ۛ وَمِنَ الَّذِيْنَ هَادُوْا ۛ
سَمّٰعُوْنَ لِلْكَذِبِ سَمّٰعُوْنَ لِقَوْمٍ
اٰخَرِيْنَ لَمْ يَاْتُوْكَ ۭ يُحَرِّفُوْنَ الْكَلِمَ
مِنْۢ بَعْدِ مَوَاضِعِهٖ ۚ يَقُوْلُوْنَ اِنْ

be given in this form receive it; but if ye be not given this wise, then beware of it". For him whom God would put on his test, thou canst in no way prevail with God. For those whose hearts God is not pleased to cleanse, (for it is the law of life that for him who delights in the impurity of sin, all doors to purity of life are barred), there is disgrace in this world and in the next a great chastisement.

أُوتِيتُمْ هَٰذَا فَخُذُوهُ وَإِن لَّمْ تُؤْتَوْهُ فَاحْذَرُوا ۚ وَمَن يُرِدِ اللَّهُ فِتْنَتَهُ فَلَن تَمْلِكَ لَهُ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ أَن يُطَهِّرَ قُلُوبَهُمْ ۚ لَهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا خِزْيٌ ۖ وَلَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٤١﴾

[42] Eavesdroppers coining lies, greedy, devourers of the forbidden—if these come to thee, decide fairly between them or leave them alone. They shall not in the least hurt thee if thou leave them alone. But if thou hast to judge between them, then judge fairly between them. Verily God loves those who judge fairly.

سَمَّاعُونَ لِلْكَذِبِ أَكَّالُونَ لِلسُّحْتِ ۚ فَإِن جَاءُوكَ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُمْ أَوْ أَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ ۖ وَإِن تُعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ فَلَن يَضُرُّوكَ شَيْئًا ۖ وَإِنْ حَكَمْتَ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُم بِالْقِسْطِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾

[43] Why should they ever make thee their judge when they have with them already the *Torah* which contains the Commandments of God and why should they choose to turn back from it? The fact is that they retain no faith therein.

وَكَيْفَ يُحَكِّمُونَكَ وَعِندَهُمُ التَّوْرَاةُ فِيهَا حُكْمُ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ يَتَوَلَّوْنَ مِن بَعْدِ ذَٰلِكَ ۚ وَمَا أُولَٰئِكَ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٤٣﴾ ع

SECTION 7

[44] Verily We have sent down the *Torah* affording guidance and light. It was in accordance with it that the prophets in duty bound administered the law to the Jews

إِنَّا أَنزَلْنَا التَّوْرَاةَ فِيهَا هُدًى وَنُورٌ ۚ يَحْكُمُ بِهَا النَّبِيُّونَ الَّذِينَ أَسْلَمُوا لِلَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالرَّبَّانِيُّونَ وَالْأَحْبَارُ

even as did their Rabbis (priests) and those learned in law who were to safeguard its integrity and interpret it properly. Therefore (ye Jews) heed none (in the upholding of Truth) but heed Me, and barter not away My commandments for a paltry price. And whoso do not judge by what God hath sent down, they are indeed rebels.

بِمَا اسْتُحْفِظُوا مِن كِتَابِ اللَّهِ وَكَانُوا
عَلَيْهِ شُهَدَاءَ ۚ فَلَا تَخْشَوُا النَّاسَ
وَاخْشَوْنِ وَلَا تَشْتَرُوا بِآيَاتِي ثَمَنًا
قَلِيلًا ۚ وَمَن لَّمْ يَحْكُم بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ
فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾

[45] And therein We laid down (the law) for them: "Life for Life, eye for eye, and nose for nose, and ear for ear, and tooth for tooth, and for other hurts, like for like." Whoso shall forego retaliation in kindliness shall have done an act of expiation (of sins committed) and those who do not judge by what God hath sent down are indeed transgressors.

وَكَتَبْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ فِيهَا أَنَّ النَّفْسَ
بِالنَّفْسِ وَالْعَيْنَ بِالْعَيْنِ وَالْأَنفَ
بِالْأَنفِ وَالْأُذُنَ بِالْأُذُنِ وَالسِّنَّ
بِالسِّنِّ وَالْجُرُوحَ قِصَاصٌ ۚ فَمَن
تَصَدَّقَ بِهِ فَهُوَ كَفَّارَةٌ لَّهُ ۚ وَمَن لَّمْ
يَحْكُم بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾

[46] In the line of the Prophets caused We to come Jesus, son of Mary, to confirm that which was already in the *Torah*; and We gave him the *Evangel*, with guidance and light afforded therein and confirming what was already in the *Torah*—a guidance and an admonition to those who cared to live aright.

وَقَفَّيْنَا عَلَىٰ آثَارِهِم بِعِيسَى ابْنِ
مَرْيَمَ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ
مِنَ التَّوْرَاةِ ۖ وَآتَيْنَاهُ الْإِنجِيلَ
فِيهِ هُدًى وَنُورٌ وَمُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا
بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ التَّوْرَاةِ وَهُدًى
وَمَوْعِظَةً لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾

[47] Let the followers of the *Evangel* administer justice in accordance with what God hath revealed therein. Those who do not judge by what God hath revealed, they are indeed reprobates.

وَلْيَحْكُمْ أَهْلُ الْإِنجِيلِ بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ
فِيهِ ۚ وَمَن لَّمْ يَحْكُم بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ
فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾

If the *Torah*, the *Evangel* and the *Qur'ān* sponsored but one and the same truth and the *Qur'ān* does not confirm the earlier expressions, thereof, then how did differences arise among their respective laws and commandments and why is it that one and the same form of devotion was not prescribed for one and all, or why different laws were promulgated at different times?

The *Qur'ān* here replies to these questions. It states that there is what is called *Dīn* and there is what is called *Shar'a* and there is also what is called *Minhāj*. *Dīn* or the way of life forms the substance; it is the way of devotion to God and of righteous living. *Shar'a* or the Law, and *Minhāj* or the ritual, form the programme or details of this way of living of *Dīn* prescribed to implement the principles implicit in *Dīn* or the way of life enjoined. *Dīn* or the way of life is but one, and it is this which has been enjoined on man by every revealed faith. But the law or *Shar'a*, and the ritual or *Minhāj* have assumed different forms, for environments and the way people react to situations have varied from age to age and from country to country. This was the reason why one common or uniform programme could not be instituted all over the world at one and the same time. In the course of this development, man lost sight of the reality or *Dīn* and concentrated his attention on what was but circumstantial and therefore had inevitably to engage his mind essentially on the differences in law and ritual, and this inevitably led to the division of mankind into diverse groups, each denying the Truth or *Dīn* to every other.

The *Qur'ān* says: "Had God so willed, He would have pressed you all into one pattern." But one can easily see that He did not do so. Diverse were the races into which mankind found themselves distributed, each living in a condition different from that of another and each engaged in satisfying the needs peculiar to it. Necessarily therefore each developed manners and customs different from every other. A difference of this nature was a difference in outward bearing or in law and ritual and should not argue a difference in the inward content of religion or *Dīn*.

[48] To thee also have We sent down the Book in proper form confirming the scriptures already delivered and to be a guardian over it. Judge thou therefore between them by that which God hath revealed and follow not their desires by setting aside the truth that hath come to thee. To every people have We given a law and a ritual, and if God had so willed He would have surely made of you all but one society; but it was His wish to test you by what He hath given to each of you. Be emulous then in good deeds (since that is the aim of every law or *Shar'a* prescribed at one time or another.) To God shall ye all return and He will make you realise the evil of wrangling over what were mere variations (in law and ritual).

وَأَنزَلْنَآ إِلَيْكَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ بِٱلْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا
لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ وَمُهَيْمِنًا
عَلَيْهِ فَٱحْكُم بَيْنَهُم بِمَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ
وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَآءَهُمْ عَمَّا جَآءَكَ
مِنَ ٱلْحَقِّ لِكُلٍّ جَعَلْنَا مِنكُمْ شِرْعَةً
وَمِنْهَاجًا وَلَوْ شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ لَجَعَلَكُمْ
أُمَّةً وَٰحِدَةً وَلَٰكِن لِّيَبْلُوَكُمْ فِى
مَآ ءَاتَىٰكُمْ فَٱسْتَبِقُوا۟ ٱلْخَيْرَٰتِ إِلَى
ٱللَّهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيعًا فَيُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا
كُنتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾

[49] Wherefore do thou judge between them by that which God hath sent down and follow not their desire and be on your guard lest they tempt thee away from any of the commandments which God hath sent down to thee. But if they turn back, then know thou that God will let them fall into trouble for some

وَأَنِ ٱحْكُم بَيْنَهُم بِمَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ وَلَا
تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَآءَهُمْ وَٱحْذَرْهُمْ أَن
يَفْتِنُوكَ عَنۢ بَعْضِ مَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ
إِلَيْكَ فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا۟ فَٱعْلَمْ أَنَّمَا يُرِيدُ
ٱللَّهُ أَن يُصِيبَهُم بِبَعْضِ ذُنُوبِهِمْ

of their sins and that a good many men are perverse.

وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ النَّاسِ لَفَاسِقُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾

[50] Desire they then to revert to the law of the time of Ignorance? What better law can there be than God's for a people firm in faith.

أَفَحُكْمَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ يَبْغُونَ ۚ وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ مِنَ اللَّهِ حُكْمًا لِّقَوْمٍ يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾

SECTION 8

[51] O ye who believe! Regard not as friends the Jews or the Nazarenes (who are out against you). They are comrades one of the other (in opposition to you), and whosoever of you will take them as friends, shall be regarded as one of them. Verily, God guideth not the unjust.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الْيَهُودَ وَالنَّصَارَىٰ أَوْلِيَاءَ ۘ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ ۚ وَمَن يَتَوَلَّهُم مِّنكُمْ فَإِنَّهُ مِنْهُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٥١﴾

[52] Indeed thou wilt see the diseased at heart hastening towards them saying (to themselves) "We fear (keeping aloof from them) lest misfortune overtake us." May be God will bring (thee) victory or give some indication of His intention. Should this come about, they surely will feel ashamed of the apprehensions which they entertained in their minds.

فَتَرَى الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِم مَّرَضٌ يُسَارِعُونَ فِيهِمْ يَقُولُونَ نَخْشَىٰ أَن تُصِيبَنَا دَائِرَةٌ ۚ فَعَسَى اللَّهُ أَن يَأْتِيَ بِالْفَتْحِ أَوْ أَمْرٍ مِّنْ عِندِهِ فَيُصْبِحُوا عَلَىٰ مَا أَسَرُّوا فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ نَادِمِينَ ﴿٥٢﴾

In verse 51 it was pointed out that since even like the polytheists of Mecca, the Jews and the Nazarenes were hostile to the Prophet, it was desirable not to take friends from their ranks; and this particularly because at the time the hypocrites among Muslims were going over to their side. Soon will these deserters have to rue the consequences of their movement.

In verse 54, it is pointed out that the Muslims in their social behaviour are gentle and lowly towards the Faithful and strict towards their enemy, and are actively devoted to the cause of God disregardful of any wilful accusations against them. They observe prayer and pay the poor due and have faith in divine help. It is people such as these who are truly the people of God or the party of God. They who form the party of God, surely will never yield to human pressure. The reference here is to those who had migrated with the Prophet from Mecca, the *Muhājirīn* and those who had welcomed them at Madina, the Ansār.

[53] And those who believe with them exclaim: these are the people who so solemnly used to swear by God "We are with you!" Their seeming acts of piety will go to waste and they shall stand losers.

وَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَهٰؤُلَاءِ
الَّذِينَ أَقْسَمُوا بِاللّٰهِ جَهْدَ أَيْمَانِهِمْ
إِنَّهُمْ لَمَعَكُمْ حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ
فَأَصْبَحُوا خَاسِرِينَ ﴿٥٣﴾

[54] O ye who believe! Should any of you turn away from his faith, (they should not fancy they could hurt the cause of God in any manner). Nay! God will raise up others, loved of God and loving Him, who shall be lowly towards the Faithful, strict towards the unbelievers, actively devoted to the cause of God without caring for the blames of those who blame wilfully. That will be the grace of God which He bestoweth on whomsoever He willeth, and God indeed is Beneficent, the Knowing.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَنْ يَرْتَدَّ مِنْكُمْ
عَنْ دِينِهِ فَسَوْفَ يَأْتِي اللّٰهُ بِقَوْمٍ
يُحِبُّهُمْ وَيُحِبُّونَهُ أَذِلَّةٍ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ
أَعِزَّةٍ عَلَى الْكٰفِرِينَ يُجَاهِدُونَ فِي
سَبِيلِ اللّٰهِ وَلَا يَخَافُونَ لَوْمَةَ لَائِمٍ
ذٰلِكَ فَضْلُ اللّٰهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ
وَاللّٰهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٥٤﴾

[55] You will find friends only

إِنَّمَا وَلِيُّكُمُ اللّٰهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالَّذِينَ

in God and His Apostle and in the believers who observe prayer and pay the poor-due and the devout.

امنوا الذين يقيمون الصلوٰة و يؤتون الزكوٰة وهم راكعون ﴿٥٥﴾

[56] And whoso take for friends God and His Apostle and the faithful,—it is these who are truly the people of God—they surely shall gain the upperhand.

ومن يتول الله ورسوله والذين امنوا فان حزب الله هم الغلبون ﴿٥٦﴾

SECTION 9

The Jews and the Christians and the Arab polytheists used to scoff at the religious practices of the Muslims.

[57] O Muslims! Take not for friends from amongst the people who have received the scriptures before you, those who rail and jest at your Faith or those who have gone against it; and fear (the consequences of disobedience to) God, if ye are true believers.

يايها الذين امنوا لا تتخذوا الذين اتخذوا دينكم هزوا ولعبا من الذين اوتوا الكتب من قبلكم والكفار اولياء واتقوا الله ان كنتم مؤمنين ﴿٥٧﴾

[58] (It is these people) who, when ye call to prayer, make it an object of raillery and jest. This they do because they are not a sensible people.

واذاناديتم الى الصلوٰة اتخذوها هزوا ولعبا ذلك بانهم قوم لا يعقلون ﴿٥٨﴾

The *Qur'ān* now addresses the people of the Book, the Jews and the Christians. It asks: Why do you stand against the *Qur'ān* when it endorses all previous messages of God and does not invite you to any new religion? What is after all the fault of its followers? Is it that they believe in God, and regard your scriptures as the word of God, even as they consider the

Qur'ān to be, and call upon you to adhere to the truth propounded by your scriptures?

The *Qur'ān* then turns to refer to the wickedness of the Jews even as they admit it and which forms the theme of some of their recognised religious narratives—narratives relating to those who were cursed by their prophets and to those who also had broken the Sabbath and been condemned on that account.

[59] Say: "O people of the Book! Do you consider it a fault in us that we believe in God, and in what hath been sent down to us and in what was sent down before us? Most of you indeed are perverse."

قُلْ يٰٓاَهْلَ الْكِتٰبِ هَلْ تَنْقِمُوْنَ مِنَّآ اِلَّآ
اَنْ اٰمَنَّا بِاللّٰهِ وَمَآ اُنْزِلَ اِلَيْنَا وَمَآ
اُنْزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَاَنَّ اَكْثَرَكُمْ فٰسِقُوْنَ ﴿٥٩﴾

[60] Say: "Shall I tell you who are truly deserving of punishment in the sight of God? It is they whom God had disowned (for having disobeyed the commandments of the scriptures) and with whom He is highly displeased and some of whom He hath caused to behave as apes and swines. They who worshipped the devil are in a much worse state; they have indeed strayed far away from the straight path."

قُلْ هَلْ اُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِشَرٍّ مِّنْ ذٰلِكَ
مَثُوْبَةً عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ ؕ مَنْ لَّعَنَهُ اللّٰهُ وَ
غَضِبَ عَلَيْهِ وَجَعَلَ مِنْهُمُ الْقِرَدَةَ
وَالْخَنَازِيْرَ وَعَبَدَ الطَّاغُوْتَ ؕ اُولٰٓئِكَ
شَرٌّ مَّكَانًا وَّاَضَلُّ عَنْ سَوَآءِ السَّبِيْلِ ﴿٦٠﴾

[61] Whenever they come to you they say: "We believe." Unbelievers are they when they come in and even as such they go away. And God knoweth well what they hide.

وَاِذَا جَآءُوْكُمْ قَالُوْٓا اٰمَنَّا وَقَدْ دَّخَلُوْا
بِالْكُفْرِ وَهُمْ قَدْ خَرَجُوْا بِهٖ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ
اَعْلَمُ بِمَا كَانُوْا يَكْتُمُوْنَ ﴿٦١﴾

[62] And many of them shalt thou see hastening towards sin

وَتَرٰى كَثِيْرًا مِّنْهُمْ يُسَارِعُوْنَ فِى

and excess and keen on appropriating what is forbidden. How heinous is all that they do!

[63] Why do their priests and learned men abstain from forbidding them to speak lies and appropriating what is forbidden? How heinous is their behaviour!

الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ وَأَكْلِهِمُ السُّحْتَ ۚ لَبِئْسَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾
لَوْلَا يَنْهَاهُمُ الرَّبَّانِيُّونَ وَالْأَحْبَارُ عَن قَوْلِهِمُ الْإِثْمَ وَأَكْلِهِمُ السُّحْتَ ۚ لَبِئْسَ مَا كَانُوا يَصْنَعُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾

The Jews used to boast that no further revelation would be delivered after the *Torah* and that no people would be deemed the chosen people other than the Israelites. They say that it is true that nothing is lacking in the treasure house of God, but they assert that having bestowed all favours on the Israelites, God's hands are tied up and will not do similar favours to other people. The reference in the following passage is to this boasting of the Jews.

[64] The Jews say: "The hand of God is tied up." Tied up shall be their own hands and condemned shall they stand for what they say. Aye. Wide open are both His hands! He grants as He will. And that which hath been sent down to thee from thy Lord will assuredly provoke greater disdainfulness and disbelief (since it draws attention to their weaknesses and directs them to give them up). And We have put enmity and spite among themselves till the day of Resurrection. As oft as they kindle the fire of war, doth God put it out. They run about spreading mis-

وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ يَدُ اللَّهِ مَغْلُولَةٌ ۚ غُلَّتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَلُعِنُوا بِمَا قَالُوا ۘ بَلْ يَدَاهُ مَبْسُوطَتَانِ يُنفِقُ كَيْفَ يَشَاءُ ۚ وَلَيَزِيدَنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنْهُم مَّا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِن رَّبِّكَ طُغْيَانًا وَكُفْرًا ۚ وَأَلْقَيْنَا بَيْنَهُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ وَالْبَغْضَاءَ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ ۚ كُلَّمَا أَوْقَدُوا نَارًا لِّلْحَرْبِ أَطْفَأَهَا اللَّهُ ۚ

chief in the land: but God liketh not the mischief-makers.

وَيَسْعَوْنَ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَسَادًا ۚ وَاللَّهُ
لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٦٤﴾

[65] But had the people of the Book only believed and been mindful of God, We would surely have put away, (the results of) their sins from them and brought them into gardens of delight.

وَلَوْ أَنَّ أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ آمَنُوا وَاتَّقَوْا
لَكَفَّرْنَا عَنْهُمْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ وَلَأَدْخَلْنَاهُمْ
جَنَّاتِ النَّعِيمِ ﴿٦٥﴾

[66] And if they had but upheld the *Torah* and the *Evangel* sent down to them from their Lord, they would assuredly have had their fill of good things from above them and from beneath their feet. Some certainly there are among them who keep to the right path; but many of them indeed do things which are evil.

وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ أَقَامُوا التَّوْرَاةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ
وَمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْهِمْ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ لَأَكَلُوا
مِنْ فَوْقِهِمْ وَمِنْ تَحْتِ أَرْجُلِهِمْ ۚ
مِنْهُمْ أُمَّةٌ مُقْتَصِدَةٌ ۖ وَكَثِيرٌ
مِنْهُمْ سَاءَ مَا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٦٦﴾

SECTION 10

The people of the Book are now told frankly that whatever the estimation in which they may hold themselves, it will not avail until they sincerely acted upon the directions of the *Torah* and the *Evangel.* Otherwise they had no means to justify their vain assertions. Further, it was made clear to them that the message of the *Qur'ān* does not demand of them a disregard of their own scriptures. On the other hand, it insists on their adhering to their teachings zealously; for, the primary mission of the *Qur'ān* is to bring home to every one the Universal and abiding truth that all revealed books of God are one and that real religion lies in devotion to God and righteous living. It is on this main teaching of all religions that the *Qur'ān* desires the entire human race to agree.

The *Qur'ān* further emphasises that salvation or a healthy progress in life is never achieved through the pursuit of any form of sectarianism, but through the pursuit of the path of belief in God and righteous action in consonance thereof, which alone in reality, is the religion for man as upheld by all the revealed books, and to conform to which the Muslims had given their word. A clarification of this principle of life has already been afforded in verse 62 of Chapter II, Al-Baqarah.

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الرَّسُوْلُ بَلِّغْ مَآ اُنْزِلَ اِلَيْكَ
مِنْ رَّبِّكَ ؕ وَاِنْ لَّمْ تَفْعَلْ فَمَا بَلَّغْتَ
رِسٰلَتَهٗ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ يَعْصِمُكَ مِنَ النَّاسِ ؕ
اِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يَهْدِى الْقَوْمَ الْكٰفِرِيْنَ ﴿٦٧﴾

[67] O thou apostle! Preach what hath been delivered to thee from thy Lord, (regardless of any opposition to you), for, if thou do it not, then thou hast failed to fulfil the function of a messenger. And God will certainly protect thee from (the evil-minded) men. Verily, God will never show the way of (success) to those who have rejected the message.

قُلْ يٰۤاَهْلَ الْكِتٰبِ لَسْتُمْ عَلٰى شَىْءٍ
يمُوا التَّوْرٰىةَ وَالْاِنْجِيْلَ
وَمَآ اُنْزِلَ اِلَيْكُمْ مِّنْ رَّبِّكُمْ ؕ
وَلَيَزِيْدَنَّ كَثِيْرًا مِّنْهُمْ مَّآ اُنْزِلَ
اِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَّبِّكَ طُغْيَانًا وَّكُفْرًا ۚ
فَلَا تَاْسَ عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكٰفِرِيْنَ ﴿٦٨﴾

[68] Say: "O People of the Book! Nothing will avail ye until ye uphold the *Torah* and the *Evangel* and that which hath been sent down to you from your Lord"; and assuredly what hath been sent down to thee will provoke greater disdainfulness and disbelief. Grieve not therefore (on that account) for those who have rejected the message.

اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَالَّذِيْنَ هَادُوْا وَ

[69] Verily they who believe in the message (of the Prophet

Muhammad) and they who are Jews and Sabians and Christians (or any one else)—whoever believeth in God and the Day to come and doeth that which is right—shall have their recompense with their Lord: fear shall not come upon them, neither shall they grieve.

الصَّابِئُونَ وَالنَّصَارَىٰ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ
وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلَا
خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾

[70] We certainly did take a covenant from the children of Israel (that they would follow the path of devotion to God and of righteous living) and sent to them apostles, one after another. But whenever an apostle came to them with what was not agreeable to them, some they declared to be imposters and some they assassinated,

لَقَدْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ
وَأَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْهِمْ رُسُلًا كُلَّمَا جَاءَهُمْ
رَسُولٌ بِمَا لَا تَهْوَىٰ أَنْفُسُهُمْ فَرِيقًا
كَذَّبُوا وَفَرِيقًا يَقْتُلُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾

[71] And reckoned that no harm would ensue. Indeed, they behaved as if they were blind and deaf. Even then did God relent towards them. Still, did many of them behave as if they were blind and deaf. And God is watching the way they (now) behave.

وَحَسِبُوا أَلَّا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةٌ فَعَمُوا وَ
صَمُّوا ثُمَّ تَابَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ ثُمَّ
عَمُوا وَصَمُّوا كَثِيرٌ مِنْهُمْ وَاللَّهُ
بَصِيرٌ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٧١﴾

The Christians also are reminded of this fundamental aspect of religion or the basic religion to be expressed in devotion to God and righteous living. This is done because even they

had turned away from the right religion and coined for themselves the doctrine of the Divinity of Christ in the Trinity.

[72] They surely are not believers in God who say that the Messiah, son of Mary, is God, whereas the Messiah himself hath said: "O children of Israel! Serve God who is my Lord and your Lord!" Whosoever takes for God any one other than He, surely to him God denieth Paradise, and Fire shall be his abode. The unjust shall not have any helpers.

لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوٓا إِنَّ اللّٰهَ هُوَ الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ ؕ وَقَالَ الْمَسِيحُ يٰبَنِىٓ إِسْرَآءِيلَ اعْبُدُوا اللّٰهَ رَبِّى وَرَبَّكُمْ ؕ إِنَّهُ مَنْ يُّشْرِكْ بِاللّٰهِ فَقَدْ حَرَّمَ اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ الْجَنَّةَ وَمَأْوٰىهُ النَّارُ ؕ وَمَا لِلظّٰلِمِينَ مِنْ أَنْصَارٍ ﴿٧٢﴾

[73] They surely are not believers in God who say: "God is the Third of Three (God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost), when (the truth is) that there is no god except God, the One. And if they desist not from what they have been saying, such of those as refuse to believe in God, the One, shall be smitten with a heavy sorrow.

لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوٓا إِنَّ اللّٰهَ ثَالِثُ ثَلٰثَةٍ ۘ وَمَا مِنْ إِلٰهٍ إِلَّآ إِلٰهٌ وَّاحِدٌ ؕ وَإِنْ لَّمْ يَنْتَهُوا عَمَّا يَقُولُونَ لَيَمَسَّنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٧٣﴾

[74] Why do they not turn to God and implore His forgiveness when God is so forgiving and merciful?

أَفَلَا يَتُوبُونَ إِلَى اللّٰهِ وَيَسْتَغْفِرُونَهُ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٧٤﴾

[75] The Messiah, son of Mary, was but an apostle. Surely apostles before him have

مَا الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ ۚ قَدْ

خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ ۚ وَأُمُّهُ صِدِّيقَةٌ ۖ
كَانَا يَأْكُلَانِ الطَّعَامَ ۗ انْظُرْ كَيْفَ نُبَيِّنُ
لَهُمُ الْآيَاتِ ثُمَّ انْظُرْ أَنَّىٰ يُؤْفَكُونَ ﴿٧٥﴾

passed away, and his mother was a truth-loving person. The two did live on food (even like other human beings, in other words, they felt the need for sustenance and thus it is clear that one who depends for life on food can hardly transcend the limitations of human nature). Mark! How convincing are the assertions that We make, and then notice how (without comprehending even this plain truth) they turn away from it.

قُلْ أَتَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لَا
يَمْلِكُ لَكُمْ ضَرًّا وَلَا نَفْعًا ۚ وَاللَّهُ هُوَ
السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿٧٦﴾

[76] Say: Will you, beside God, serve aught that hath no power either to harm you or benefit you, when it is God alone who hears (one's prayers) and knows (the needs of everyone)?

قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لَا تَغْلُوا فِي دِينِكُمْ
غَيْرَ الْحَقِّ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا أَهْوَاءَ قَوْمٍ
قَدْ ضَلُّوا مِنْ قَبْلُ وَأَضَلُّوا كَثِيرًا
وَضَلُّوا عَنْ سَوَاءِ السَّبِيلِ ﴿٧٧﴾ ع

[77] Say: O people of the Book! Do not emphasise anything in the name of religion at the cost of truth, and do not follow the fancies of those who in the past had gone astray, and led many astray and are still straying away from the straight path.

SECTION 11

The *Qur'ān* points out that these people had grown so hardened that having wilfully taken to an evil way, they never thought of ever giving it up When such a state of mind is

developed by any people, denying to themselves every urge for reform, it becomes clear that they had reached the lowest depths of degeneracy.

[78] (It was why) David and Jesus, son of Mary, had pronounced the malison of God on such of the children of Israel as had rejected them and this, because they were rebellious and had committed excesses.

لُعِنَ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا مِنْ بَنِيْٓ اِسْرَآءِيْلَ
عَلٰى لِسَانِ دَاوٗدَ وَعِيْسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ
ذٰلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوْا وَّكَانُوْا يَعْتَدُوْنَ ﴿٧٨﴾

[79] Once they took to an evil way, they never thereafter desisted from it. How heinous was that which they were doing!

كَانُوْا لَا يَتَنَاهَوْنَ عَنْ مُّنْكَرٍ فَعَلُوْهُ
لَبِئْسَ مَا كَانُوْا يَفْعَلُوْنَ ﴿٧٩﴾

[80] Thou wilt see many of them making friends of the unbelievers (of Mecca). Evil assuredly is that which they had prepared for themselves in advance, courting thereby the displeasure of God; and in distress will they live.

تَرٰى كَثِيْرًا مِّنْهُمْ يَتَوَلَّوْنَ الَّذِيْنَ
كَفَرُوْا لَبِئْسَ مَا قَدَّمَتْ لَهُمْ اَنْفُسُهُمْ
اَنْ سَخِطَ اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَفِي الْعَذَابِ
هُمْ خٰلِدُوْنَ ﴿٨٠﴾

[81] Had they only believed in God and (in their own) prophet and in that which was sent down to him (*Torah*, or *Evangel*), they would certainly not have taken them for friends (those who were opposed to such as believed in God). But many of them are perverse.

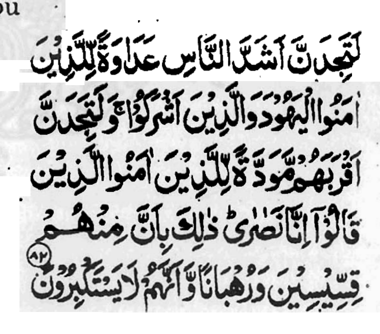
وَلَوْ كَانُوْا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِاللّٰهِ وَالنَّبِيِّ وَمَآ
اُنْزِلَ اِلَيْهِ مَا اتَّخَذُوْهُمْ اَوْلِيَآءَ وَ
لٰكِنَّ كَثِيْرًا مِّنْهُمْ فٰسِقُوْنَ ﴿٨١﴾

The *Qur'ān* now turns to address the prophet. It says that he will find the Jews of his time and the Arab polytheists his bitterest opponents and that as against them, he will find the Christians the least offensive, as their monks are a pious people and practise humility and gentleness in accordance with the teachings of the *Evangel.*

It may be noted that in the early years of the prophet's mission, the Muslims were practically in a helpless state, so much so, that a party of them had to seek shelter in Abyssinia where a Christian monarch, the Negus, reigned. The Negus welcomed them to his territory. One day he asked them to recite some of the utterances of their prophet. In response to this, the chapter of the *Qur'ān* entitled 'Mary' was recited. So impressed did the Negus feel that tears rolled down his cheeks irresistibly and he cried out: "Aye! the same spirit is at work in the utterance of Christ himself."

Even in the Arab land, a large section of the Christian community had come to believe in the mission of the Prophet. But the inertness of the Jews could not be ruffled in the least. They continued to persist in their intrigue against the Muslims till their activities became so unbearable that Caliph Omar was forced to order their removal from their stronghold of Khaibar.

[82] (O Prophet) Of all men thou wilt find the Jews and their associates (the Meccan polytheists) the bitterest in enmity towards the believers, and thou wilt find the nearest in friendship those who say: "We are Christians." This, because among them there are priests and monks, and because they do not behave arrogantly.


لَتَجِدَنَّ أَشَدَّ النَّاسِ عَدَاوَةً لِّلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا الْيَهُودَ وَالَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا ۖ وَلَتَجِدَنَّ أَقْرَبَهُم مَّوَدَّةً لِّلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّا نَصَارَىٰ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ مِنْهُمْ قِسِّيسِينَ وَرُهْبَانًا وَأَنَّهُمْ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ ٨٢

PART VII

Chapter V

AL-MĀ'IDA (*Contd.*)



AL-MĀ'IDA (*Contd.*)

[83] And when they hear what hath been sent down to the Apostle, thou wilt see their eyes overflow with tears because of the truth which they recognise. They say: "Our Lord! We believe. Write us down therefore with those who bear witness.

وَإِذَا سَمِعُوا مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَى الرَّسُولِ تَرَىٰ أَعْيُنَهُمْ تَفِيضُ مِنَ الدَّمْعِ مِمَّا عَرَفُوا مِنَ الْحَقِّ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا آمَنَّا فَاكْتُبْنَا مَعَ الشَّاهِدِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾

[84] "And what aileth us that we should not believe in God and in the truth which hath come down to us when we expect God to admit us into the company of the righteous?"

وَمَا لَنَا لَا نُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَمَا جَاءَنَا مِنَ الْحَقِّ وَنَطْمَعُ أَن يُدْخِلَنَا رَبُّنَا مَعَ الْقَوْمِ الصَّالِحِينَ ﴿٨٤﴾

[85] So God rewarded them for these words with gardens wherein streams flow, and therein they shall dwell; and this is the recompense of those who do good.

فَأَثَابَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِمَا قَالُوا جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا وَذَٰلِكَ جَزَاءُ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٨٥﴾

[86] But they who believe not and treat our revelations as lies—they indeed are companions of Fire.

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَحِيمِ ﴿٨٦﴾

It has been observed very often that those who are given to religion have mistakenly regarded asceticism as a means of achieving nearness to God. That was why asceticism found its honoured place in Christianity. This belief grew so strong that ascetics denied to themselves every form of physical satisfaction. Since in the verse above, the *Qur'ān* had commended the gentility and humility of the Christians, it

found it necessary also to draw attention to their weaknesses as well. It then gave a few rulings touching human conduct:

(1) Do not deny yourself the good things of life which have been declared lawful. The habit is not commendable.

(2) It had become a custom among the people of the time to take oaths to the effect that they would never touch a particular food while alive, or that they would deny to themselves such and such a pleasure.

The *Qur'ān* points out that oaths taken in this manner have no value. If these oaths are taken in earnest and are broken on any account, then one will have to offer, with equal earnestness, its expiation in a sensible form.

(3) Wine, gambling, the setting up of altars for gods and the practice of divining arrows are prohibited.

Section 12

[87] O Muslims! Do not treat as unlawful for you the things wholesome which God hath made lawful for you and do not overstep the bounds (of law), for God liketh not those who overstep these bounds.

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تُحَرِّمُوْا طَيِّبٰتِ
مَآ اَحَلَّ اللّٰهُ لَكُمْ وَلَا تَعْتَدُوْا ط
اِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِيْنَ ﴿٨٧﴾

[88] And eat, of what God hath given you for food, that which is lawful and wholesome, and be mindful of God in whom you believe.

وَكُلُوْا مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ اللّٰهُ حَلٰلًا طَيِّبًا
وَّاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ الَّذِيْٓ اَنْتُمْ بِهٖ مُؤْمِنُوْنَ ﴿٨٨﴾

[89] God will not call you to account for whatever is vain in your oaths; but He will certainly take you to task for oaths made seriously, the expiation whereof is the feeding of ten poor persons with such normal food as you feed your own families with, or the clothing of them

لَا يُؤَاخِذُكُمُ اللّٰهُ بِاللَّغْوِ فِيْٓ اَيْمَانِكُمْ
وَلٰكِنْ يُّؤَاخِذُكُمْ بِمَا عَقَّدْتُّمُ
فَكَفَّارَتُهٗٓ اِطْعَامُ عَشَرَةِ
مَسٰكِيْنَ مِنْ اَوْسَطِ مَا تُطْعِمُوْنَ

or the setting free of a captive.
But he who cannot find this
possible shall fast three
days. This is the expiation
of your oaths when ye have sworn
(wrongfully). But keep your oaths
(taken rightly). Thus doth God
make clear to you His directions
that haply ye may give thanks.

أهليكم أو كسوتهم أو تحرير رقبة
فمن لم يجد فصيام ثلثة أيام
ذلك كفارة أيمانكم إذا حلفتم
واحفظوا أيمانكم كذلك يبين
الله لكم آيته لعلكم تشكرون ٨٩

[90] O ye who believe! Verily wine
and games of chance, stone altars
and divining arrows, are abomi-
nation, the handiwork of Satan;
so avoid them that ye may prosper.

يأيها الذين آمنوا إنما الخمر والميسر
والأنصاب والأزلام رجس من
عمل الشيطن فاجتنبوه لعلكم
تفلحون ٩٠

[91] Verily Satan only desireth
to breed enmity and spite among you
by means of wine and games
of chance and turn you
aside (as a necessary result) from
the remembrance of God and from
prayer. Will you then abstain
from them?

إنما يريد الشيطن أن يوقع بينكم
العداوة والبغضاء في الخمر
والميسر ويصدكم عن ذكر الله وعن
الصلوة فهل أنتم منتهون ٩١

[92] Obey God and obey the
apostle and be on your guard.
But if ye turn away, then,
know that our apostle has
but to deliver the message
plainly. (To carry out his
directions or not is a matter
which rests with you; only, remember
that as you sow, so shall you reap.)

وأطيعوا الله وأطيعوا الرسول
واحذروا فإن توليتم فاعلموا
أنما على رسولنا البلغ المبين ٩٢

It has already been indicated in Chapter IV, verse 43, that the Arabs were addicted to wine. But prohibition was attempted piece-meal, and the final order for total prohibition was issued when things were eventually favourable for it, as now stated in verse 91 of this chapter. It was in like manner that

injunctions declaring what was lawful and unlawful were promulgated. The question arose whether those who were prone to such weaknesses would be taken to task for what they had done in the past. All apprehensions in this regard were set at rest. The answer was given by the *Qur'ān* in the negative. Those who did not return to their old habits and tacitly conformed to whatever was ordained for them and were staunch in their reformed behaviour, surely did not deserve to be taken to task for what they had done before they were ordered to reform themselves.

For instance, one of the two items of the programme of reform is taken up here for a little clarification. It may be recalled that taking to the chase in the state of pilgrimage had been prohibited. The *Qur'ān* points out that the order so issued was meant to be seriously carried out. It was aimed to test the pilgrim's sense of obedience to divine instructions. That was why a penalty was attached to it in the case of any wilful disregard of it. The penalty was in the form of a course of expiation. It is however pointed out here that catching fish for food while crossing a sea on one's pilgrimage was not prohibited.

It was also pointed out that the instructions issued to respect the monuments of God on the way to His House had been issued with a high purpose in view. The idea was that the pilgrims should march forward towards the Holy House with their minds composed and thereby feel disinclined to cause any disturbance to the atmosphere of peace that should dwell in the neighbourhood of Kabbah and on the way to it.

[93] No blame shall rest on those who believe and do good for, what they may have eaten before, so long as they abstain from it in future and believe and work righteously and continue to observe abstinence and believe, and thus go on

لَيْسَ عَلَى الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ
جُنَاحٌ فِيْمَا طَعِمُوْٓا اِذَا مَا اتَّقَوْا وَّ
اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ ثُمَّ اتَّقَوْا وَّ

abstaining and doing good. (Remember) God liketh those who do good.

اٰمَنُوْا ثُمَّ اتَّقَوْا وَّاَحْسَنُوْا ۭ وَاللّٰهُ
يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِيْنَ ﴿٩٣﴾ ع

SECTION 13

[94] O Muslims! God will indeed test you (in the state of pilgrimage) by the game which your hands and your lances may reach in order that God might know which of you is mindful of Him in secret; so, for him who nevertheless transgresseth, there shall be a painful chastisement.

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَيَبْلُوَنَّكُمُ اللّٰهُ بِشَيْءٍ
مِّنَ الصَّيْدِ تَنَالُهٗٓ اَيْدِيْكُمْ وَرِمَاحُكُمْ
لِيَعْلَمَ اللّٰهُ مَنْ يَّخَافُهٗ بِالْغَيْبِ ۚ فَمَنِ
اعْتَدٰى بَعْدَ ذٰلِكَ فَلَهٗ عَذَابٌ اَلِيْمٌ ﴿٩٤﴾

[95] O Muslims! Kill no game while you are in the state of pilgrimage. If any of you kill it intentionally, then he shall bring to the Ka'abah an offering in compensation, a domestic animal of like value as may be decided upon by two just persons from among you, or failing this he shall in expiation, feed the poor, or fast for an appropriate period, that he may realise the grievousness of his deed. God hath overlooked what is past. But if any one repeateth (the offence), God will exact penalty from him, for God is Mighty, the awarder of punishments.

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تَقْتُلُوا الصَّيْدَ وَ
اَنْتُمْ حُرُمٌ ۭ وَمَنْ قَتَلَهٗ مِنْكُمْ مُّتَعَمِّدًا
فَجَزَاۗءٌ مِّثْلُ مَا قَتَلَ مِنَ النَّعَمِ
يَحْكُمُ بِهٖ ذَوَا عَدْلٍ مِّنْكُمْ هَدْيًۢا
بٰلِغَ الْكَعْبَةِ اَوْ كَفَّارَةٌ طَعَامُ مَسٰكِيْنَ
اَوْ عَدْلُ ذٰلِكَ صِيَامًا لِّيَذُوْقَ وَبَالَ
اَمْرِهٖ ۭ عَفَا اللّٰهُ عَمَّا سَلَفَ ۭ وَمَنْ عَادَ
فَيَنْتَقِمُ اللّٰهُ مِنْهُ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ عَزِيْزٌ ذُو انْتِقَامٍ ﴿٩٥﴾

[96] Lawful as a provision for you and for those on journey is the game of the sea and

اُحِلَّ لَكُمْ صَيْدُ الْبَحْرِ وَطَعَامُهٗ مَتَاعًا

لكم وللسيارة وحرم عليكم صيد
[illegible]
إليه تحشرون ٩٦

the eating thereof, and not lawful to you is the game of the land while you are in the state of pilgrimage and fear (the consequences of disobeying) God before whom ye shall be assembled.

جعل الله الكعبة البيت الحرام قيما للناس والشهر الحرام والهدى والقلائد ذلك لتعلموا أن الله يعلم ما في السموت وما في الأرض وأن الله بكل شيء عليم ٩٧

[97] God hath appointed the Ka'abah, the sacred House, to be a factor for (peace and) unity among mankind and also the sacred month and the offerings with their distinguishing collars. This, that ye may know that God knoweth all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth, and that God hath knowledge of everything.

اعلموا أن الله شديد العقاب وأن الله غفور رحيم ٩٨

[98] Know that God is strict in chastising and that God is also Forgiving, the Merciful.

ما على الرسول إلا البلغ والله يعلم ما تبدون وما تكتمون ٩٩

[99] The apostle has only to deliver the message; but God knoweth what you do openly or in secret.

What God hath made unlawful are things unclean and injurious, whereas those made lawful are clean and wholesome. However plentiful the unclean things you may have access to and however sparse those that are clean, do not be attracted to the unclean. A sensible man does not value a thing merely because it is found in abundance. He looks only to the benefits he may derive from it.

In regard to the habit of asking irrelevant questions and of indulging in meaningless disquisition over issues of religious importance already dealt with in Chapter II, verse 108, the *Qur'an* states that it is not the purpose of religion to impose

hard restrictions on the acquisition of wealth. So, do not indulge in questions arising out of your fancy. If you do so, you will be simply creating unnecessary obstacles in your way, and you will go the way of the Israelites, who had restricted their activities in every sphere and consequentially lost all opportunities to act aright.

The polytheists of Mecca were in the habit of dedicating animals to their deities and regarding them sacred and associating with them various superstitious beliefs. Here a reference is made to the animals dedicated in this manner. One of these animals was *Bahīrah*, a she-camel which bore five offsprings and the ears of which were slit as a sign of dedication to some deity.

Another animal called *Sā'ibah* was again a she-camel dedicated to the deities. It was regarded so sacred that none was allowed to ride her, nor shear her, nor make use of her milk.

Waṣīlah, another animal, was a she-goat which produced, after its first-born, two female offsprings one after another. This also was held sacred.

The dedicated animal *Hāmī* was a camel which had produced ten offsprings, and it was considered not proper to use it for food.

The *Qur'ān* considers all these mere superstitions never sanctioned by God.

Should others go astray, their doing so should not lead you astray. Every one is responsible for what he does. No one is responsible for the doings of others. One should hold to truth even when the rest of the world hath gone astray.

In regard to any bequest that you may make, there should be two trustworthy Muslim witnesses to it. When it is not possible to get two such witnesses, their places may be taken by two trustworthy non-Muslims. The witnesses are to give their evidence on the usual oath. When differences arise between the parties concerned, each party will have to present its witnesses. The party which refuses to produce witnesses will have to affirm everything on oath.

[100] Say: "The impure and the pure shall not be valued alike, even though the abundance of the impure may seem attractive to you." Fear (the chastisement of) God, therefore, O ye men of understanding, in order that it may be well with you.

قُلْ لَّا يَسْتَوِي الْخَبِيثُ وَالطَّيِّبُ وَلَوْ
أَعْجَبَكَ كَثْرَةُ الْخَبِيثِ ۚ فَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ
يٰٓأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٠٠﴾

SECTION 14

[101] O ye who believe! Do not ask of things (fancifully) which if declared to you will only annoy you; but if ye do ask of them especially while the *Qur'ān* is being revealed, your questions will certainly be answered, (but the consequences will be hurtful to you). God hath in the past overlooked such questioning; for God is Forgiving, Forbearing. (But beware of asking such questions in future.)

يٰٓأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ اٰمَنُوا لَا تَسْأَلُوا عَنْ أَشْيَاءَ
إِنْ تُبْدَ لَكُمْ تَسُؤْكُمْ ۚ وَإِنْ
تَسْأَلُوا عَنْهَا حِينَ يُنَزَّلُ الْقُرْاٰنُ
تُبْدَ لَكُمْ ۖ عَفَا اللّٰهُ عَنْهَا ۖ وَاللّٰهُ
غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ ﴿١٠١﴾

[102] Indeed some people before You, (Israelites), had asked questions disregarding the very ordinances of God (issued in regard to the subjects touched by them).

قَدْ سَأَلَهَا قَوْمٌ مِّنْ قَبْلِكُمْ ثُمَّ أَصْبَحُوا
بِهَا كٰفِرِينَ ﴿١٠٢﴾

[103] God hath not sanctioned (the practices associated with) *Bahīrah*, *Sā'ibah*, *Waṣila* and *Hāmī*. But the unbelievers have foisted this superstition on God and most of them lack understanding.

مَا جَعَلَ اللّٰهُ مِنْ بَحِيرَةٍ وَّلَا سَآئِبَةٍ
وَّلَا وَصِيلَةٍ وَّلَا حَامٍ ۙ وَّلٰكِنَّ الَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوا يَفْتَرُونَ عَلَى اللّٰهِ الْكَذِبَ ۖ
وَأَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٠٣﴾

[104] And when it is said to them: "come to what God hath sent down and to the apostle,"

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا إِلٰى مَآ أَنْزَلَ

they say: "Sufficient for us is that wherein we found our fathers." (Ask them whether they will regard it as sufficient) even if their fathers were ignorant and had received no right guidance.

اللّٰهُ وَإِلَى الرَّسُولِ
وَجَدْنَا عَلَيْهِ آبَاءَنَا ۚ أَوَلَوْ كَانَ
آبَاؤُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٠٤﴾

[105] O ye who believe! Look to your own selves. One who hath himself gone astray cannot harm you when you are yourselves on the right path. After all, to God shall ye return. Then He will let you realise what you have been doing.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا عَلَيْكُمْ أَنفُسَكُمْ ۖ لَا
يَضُرُّكُم مَّن ضَلَّ إِذَا اهْتَدَيْتُمْ ۚ
إِلَى اللَّهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيعًا فَيُنَبِّئُكُم
بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٠٥﴾

[106] O ye who believe! If on death approaching any of you, you (wish to) make a bequest, let there be two witnesses to it—upright men from amongst you, or two from among others, in case you are journeying in the land and the fear of death takes hold of you. In case ye (the heirs) suspect them (the two witnesses), detain the two till after the prayer, and let them both invoke God and say: "We will not sell our oath for any price to any one, be he a kindred, and will not conceal the testimony for God, for then, we shall certainly be sinners."

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا شَهَادَةُ بَيْنِكُمْ
إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ حِينَ
الْوَصِيَّةِ اثْنَانِ ذَوَا عَدْلٍ مِّنكُمْ أَوْ
آخَرَانِ مِنْ غَيْرِكُمْ إِنْ أَنتُمْ ضَرَبْتُمْ
فِي الْأَرْضِ فَأَصَابَتْكُم مُّصِيبَةُ الْمَوْتِ
الصَّلَاةِ فَيُقْسِمَانِ
بِاللَّهِ إِنِ ارْتَبْتُمْ لَا نَشْتَرِي بِهِ ثَمَنًا
وَلَوْ كَانَ ذَا قُرْبَىٰ ۙ وَلَا نَكْتُمُ شَهَادَةَ
اللَّهِ إِنَّا إِذًا لَّمِنَ الْآثِمِينَ ﴿١٠٦﴾

[107] If it is found there-

فَإِنْ عُثِرَ عَلَىٰ أَنَّهُمَا اسْتَحَقَّا إِثْمًا

after that the two had sinned (perjured), then let two others nearest in kin take their place amongst those who had been denied their rights and swear by God: "We affirm, that what we will say is more correct than what they have said and we will not exaggerate; for then, we will be truly unjust."

فَـَٔاخَرَانِ يَقُومَانِ مَقَامَهُمَا مِنَ الَّذِينَ
اسْتَحَقَّ عَلَيْهِمُ الْأَوْلَيَانِ فَيُقْسِمَانِ بِاللَّهِ
لَشَهَادَتُنَا أَحَقُّ مِن شَهَادَتِهِمَا وَمَا
اعْتَدَيْنَا إِنَّا إِذًا لَّمِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ ١٠٧

[108] In this way, it will be more likely that they will be true to facts or they will say so (at least) out of fear that they will be contradicted, under an (equally solemn) oath. At all events, fear ye God (from the consequences of perjury) and hearken (to His commands). And remember that God doth not guide a disobedient people.

ذَٰلِكَ أَدْنَىٰ أَن يَأْتُوا بِالشَّهَادَةِ عَلَىٰ
وَجْهِهَا أَوْ يَخَافُوا أَن تُرَدَّ أَيْمَانٌ بَعْدَ
أَيْمَانِهِمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاسْمَعُوا وَاللَّهُ
لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ ١٠٨ ع

In the last verse, the *Qur'ān* had drawn attention to the consequences of disobedience to God's behests. He doth not show the right way, the way of success, to the disobedient. The *Qur'ān* now presents in perspective the picture of the Day when He would address the prophets and ask them how far they had succeeded in revealing the message of truth sent through them and to what extent had the people acted upon the directions given to them. It then speaks of the mission of Christ with all its implications.

Section 15

[109] One day (the Day of judgement) will God assemble the apostles and

يَوْمَ يَجْمَعُ اللَّهُ الرُّسُلَ فَيَقُولُ مَاذَآ

ask of them: "What response have you had to your call (and to what extent did your people act upon your directions)?" They would say: "We have really no exact knowledge. Verily Thou knowest all that is not known to us."

أُجِبْتُمْ ۖ قَالُوا لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا ۖ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ
عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ ﴿١٠٩﴾

[110] Then (turning to Jesus) God will say: "O Jesus! Son of Mary! Call to mind My favour upon thee and upon thy mother when I aided thee with the Holy Spirit,[1] so that thou didst speak to men, alike in the cradle and when thou grew up, and when I taught thee the Book and the Wisdom (underlying it) and the *Torah* and the *Evangel*; and when thou didst fashion by My permission out of clay a thing bearing the semblance of a bird, thou didst breathe into it and, by My leave, it became a bird; and when thou didst heal the blind born and the leper by My leave; and by My leave when thou didst raise the dead; and when I held back the children of Israel (from attacking thee) as thou brought to them clear signs (of thy mission) and when such of them as believed

إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ اذْكُرْ
نِعْمَتِي عَلَيْكَ وَعَلَىٰ وَالِدَتِكَ إِذْ
أَيَّدتُّكَ بِرُوحِ الْقُدُسِ تُكَلِّمُ
النَّاسَ فِي الْمَهْدِ وَكَهْلًا ۖ وَإِذْ عَلَّمْتُكَ
الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَالتَّوْرَاةَ وَالْإِنجِيلَ ۖ
وَإِذْ تَخْلُقُ مِنَ الطِّينِ كَهَيْئَةِ الطَّيْرِ
بِإِذْنِي فَتَنفُخُ فِيهَا فَتَكُونُ طَيْرًا بِإِذْنِي ۖ
وَتُبْرِئُ الْأَكْمَهَ وَالْأَبْرَصَ بِإِذْنِي ۖ
وَإِذْ تُخْرِجُ الْمَوْتَىٰ بِإِذْنِي ۖ وَإِذْ كَفَفْتُ
بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ عَنكَ إِذْ جِئْتَهُم
بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ فَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْهُمْ

[1] This means either the holy angel sent to Christ or the purity of spiritual talent vouchsafed to him.

not said: "This is nothing
but plain sorcery";

إِنْ هٰذَآ إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١١٠﴾

[111] And when I bade thy
companions, "Believe in Me
and My apostles," they said:
"We believe and bear thou
witness that we are Muslims."

وَإِذْ أَوْحَيْتُ إِلَى الْحَوَارِيِّنَ أَنْ اٰمِنُوا
بِي وَبِرَسُولِي ۚ قَالُوٓا اٰمَنَّا وَاشْهَدْ
بِأَنَّنَا مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿١١١﴾

Apropos this address of God to the prophets, the *Qur'ān* takes the occasion to refer to the prayer which Christ had made to God on the request of his companions asking for a tray of food to come down to them. He is reminded also of the favours that had been done to him and asks of him why it was that despite these favours, his followers had fallen into the serious error of taking him and his mother for God Him-self. (The Catholic Church still believes in this doctrine although after Luther, those who seceded from the Catholic Church did not continue to believe therein.) Christ would then reply that he was not to blame.

The idea underlying this narration is just to emphasise that the messengers of Truth preached but one concept—namely the Unity of God. It was only their followers that came after them who deified their prophets. It is they who are responsible for this heresy and not the prophets.

[112] And when the companions
said: "O Jesus! Son of Mary!
Is thy Lord able to send down
to us a tray of food from above?"
He replied: "Fear God (or abstain
from entertaining such wishes),
if ye be truly men of faith."

إِذْ قَالَ الْحَوَارِيُّونَ يٰعِيسَى ابْنَ
مَرْيَمَ هَلْ يَسْتَطِيعُ رَبُّكَ أَنْ يُّنَزِّلَ
عَلَيْنَا مَآئِدَةً مِّنَ السَّمَآءِ ۖ قَالَ اتَّقُوا
اللّٰهَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١١٢﴾

[113] They said: ("By this we
do not mean to test the power
of God). We only desire to
eat the food sent
down and to have our hearts

قَالُوا نُرِيدُ أَنْ نَّأْكُلَ مِنْهَا وَتَطْمَئِنَّ
قُلُوبُنَا وَنَعْلَمَ أَنْ قَدْ صَدَقْتَنَا وَ

satisfied and to know that thou indeed hadst spoken the truth to us and be witnesses thereof."

تَكُونَ عَلَيْهَا مِنَ الشّٰهِدِينَ ﴿١١٣﴾

[114] Said Jesus, son of Mary: "O God our Lord! Send down to us a tray of food from above for a festival to the first and to the last of us and as a sign from Thee, and do Thou nourish us; and Thou indeed art the best of nourishers."

قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ اللّٰهُمَّ رَبَّنَآ أَنْزِلْ عَلَيْنَا مَآئِدَةً مِّنَ السَّمَآءِ تَكُونُ لَنَا عِيدًا لِّأَوَّلِنَا وَآخِرِنَا وَآيَةً مِّنْكَ وَارْزُقْنَا وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الرّٰزِقِينَ ﴿١١٤﴾

[115] God said: "Send it down to you, I will certainly; but beware that after this, whoever among you shall turn away from the right path, I will surely chastise him with a chastisement the like of which was never dealt to any one else in the world.

قَالَ اللّٰهُ إِنِّي مُنَزِّلُهَا عَلَيْكُمْ فَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بَعْدُ مِنْكُمْ فَإِنِّيٓ أُعَذِّبُهُ عَذَابًا لَّآ أُعَذِّبُهُ أَحَدًا مِّنَ الْعٰلَمِينَ ﴿١١٥﴾

SECTION 16

[116] And when God will say: "O Jesus! Son of Mary! Did'st thou say to men: 'Take me and my mother as two gods apart from God'." He will say: "Transcendant art Thou! It ill becomes me to say that which I know to be not the truth. Had I said this, surely Thou wouldst have known it. Thou knowest what is in me, but I know not what is in Thee; for, Thou well knowest all that is not open to human vision.

وَإِذْ قَالَ اللّٰهُ يٰعِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ ءَأَنْتَ قُلْتَ لِلنَّاسِ اتَّخِذُونِي وَأُمِّيَ إِلٰهَيْنِ مِنْ دُونِ اللّٰهِ قَالَ سُبْحٰنَكَ مَا يَكُونُ لِيٓ أَنْ أَقُولَ مَا لَيْسَ لِي بِحَقٍّ إِنْ كُنْتُ قُلْتُهُ فَقَدْ عَلِمْتَهُ تَعْلَمُ مَا فِي نَفْسِي وَلَآ أَعْلَمُ مَا فِي نَفْسِكَ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ عَلّٰمُ الْغُيُوبِ ﴿١١٦﴾

[117] "I said naught to them except what Thou didst bid me say: 'Serve God, my Lord, and your Lord' and I was a witness over them while I stayed among them, but after Thou didst complete my term, Thou hast Thyself watched them. And Thou art indeed the witness of all things.

مَا قُلْتُ لَهُمْ إِلَّا مَآ أَمَرْتَنِى بِهِۦٓ أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ رَبِّى وَرَبَّكُمْ ۚ وَكُنتُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا مَّا دُمْتُ فِيهِمْ ۖ فَلَمَّا تَوَفَّيْتَنِى كُنتَ أَنتَ الرَّقِيبَ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ وَأَنتَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ﴿١١٧﴾

[118] "If thou chastise them, (Thou mayest so do) for, after all, they are Thy servants; and if Thou forgive them, then verily Thou! Thou art the Mighty, the Wise."

إِن تُعَذِّبْهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ عِبَادُكَ ۖ وَإِن تَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ فَإِنَّكَ أَنتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿١١٨﴾

[119] God will say: "This is the day when the truthfulness of the truthful shall stand in good stead. Gardens shall they have wherein flow streams and therein shall they dwell for ever—God pleased with them and they with Him! This indeed is the highest bliss.

قَالَ اللَّهُ هَٰذَا يَوْمُ يَنفَعُ الصَّٰدِقِينَ صِدْقُهُمْ ۚ لَهُمْ جَنَّٰتٌ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَآ أَبَدًا ۚ رَّضِىَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ﴿١١٩﴾

[120] And to God belongeth dominion over the heavens and the earth and all that there is therein and He hath power over all things.

لِلَّهِ مُلْكُ السَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا فِيهِنَّ ۚ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌۢ ﴿١٢٠﴾

CHAPTER VI

THE CATTLE

Mecca

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Section 1

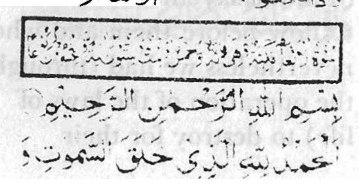
In the previous chapters, the *Qur'ān* addressed itself to the people of the Book. In this chapter, however, it turns to the polytheists of Mecca and addresses itself to these as well as to all those who do not believe in any revealed scripture or entertain faith in the life Hereafter.

God created the entire universe and with it both light and darkness. Every eye can easily distinguish between darkness and light. Nevertheless, those who refuse to yield to His commandments do not distinguish one from the other, and set up for themselves compeers for God. They refuse to resign themselves to God who is the Creator of their very being and who has fixed for all two distinct stages in life—one present and the other, the hereafter. The one is the stage for action, the other is the stage for reaping what one has worked for.

Pity the indifference of man! Having always been indifferent to the signs of God, when at this moment the call of Truth has gone forth, he shows clear signs of indifference

The *Qur'ān*, therefore, calls upon all those who are indifferent to take a lesson from what has happened to those who had discarded the Truth. It emphasises that the path of faith and right living is the path of reflection and true insight and not of mere adhering to the ignorant past. الأنعام ٦ وإذا سمعوا ٧

[1] Absolute praise is for God alone, who hath created the heavens and the earth and devised dark-



ness and light. Yet those who disbelieve set up peers for God.

الْأَرْضَ وَجَعَلَ الظُّلُمٰتِ وَالنُّورَ ۖ
ثُمَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِرَبِّهِمْ يَعْدِلُونَ ①

[2] He it is who hath moulded you out of clay and then fixed the term (of your activity in life) and ordained another term also, known only to Him, when the recompense of your deeds will be dispensed; and yet ye entertain doubts thereof.

هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِّنْ طِينٍ ثُمَّ قَضٰى
أَجَلًا ۖ وَأَجَلٌ مُّسَمًّى عِنْدَهُ ثُمَّ
أَنْتُمْ تَمْتَرُونَ ②

[3] And He it is who is God in the heavens as well as in the earth. He knoweth what ye do secretly and what ye do openly and knoweth what you work for.

وَهُوَ اللّٰهُ فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَفِي الْأَرْضِ ۖ
يَعْلَمُ سِرَّكُمْ وَجَهْرَكُمْ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا
تَكْسِبُونَ ③

[4] Not a sign cometh to them from their Lord but they turn away therefrom.

وَمَا تَأْتِيهِمْ مِّنْ اٰيَةٍ مِّنْ اٰيٰتِ رَبِّهِمْ
إِلَّا كَانُوا عَنْهَا مُعْرِضِينَ ④

[5] Now that the Truth hath come to them (or the message of the *Qur'ān*), they have treated it as a lie; but soon will come to them the realisation of the worth of that which they had mocked at.

فَقَدْ كَذَّبُوا بِالْحَقِّ لَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ ۖ
فَسَوْفَ يَأْتِيهِمْ أَنْبٰٓؤُا مَا كَانُوا بِهِ
يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ⑤

[6] Have they not seen how many generations before them We have destroyed—those whom We had established in the earth more firmly than you and for whom We had sent down copious rains from the sky and had caused rivers to flow before them and whom nevertheless we had (through the operation of the laws of life) to destroy for their

أَلَمْ يَرَوْا كَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ مِّنْ
قَرْنٍ مَّكَّنّٰهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَا لَمْ نُمَكِّنْ
لَّكُمْ وَأَرْسَلْنَا السَّمَاءَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِّدْرَارًا
وَّجَعَلْنَا الْأَنْهٰرَ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهِمْ
فَأَهْلَكْنٰهُمْ بِذُنُوبِهِمْ وَأَنْشَأْنَا مِنْ

iniquities and raise up in their place a generation of other people.

بَعْدِهِمْ قَرْنًا اٰخَرِيْنَ ⑥

Those who seek after Truth, they regard all signs of Truth as proof thereof or argument in its support. On the other hand, for those who are unwilling to recognise Truth, no signs of it will be of any avail. It is such people, or those who avoid to face Truth who call for the performance of miracles to endorse the truth advanced. But the way of God is not to comply with such fantastic demands; such people will not accept Truth even when miracles are wrought to satisfy them. For, he who cannot accept Truth for its own sake will never accept it on any account. (vide Q. 2.: 118).

In this world of ours, life is not so ordered that angels should come down and move about before men. Even if angels should descend upon us, they will necessarily have to do so in human form.

[7] And (O Prophet) had we sent down unto thee the Message written on parchment which they could touch with their hands, even then those who would not believe, would have said: "This is nothing but plain sorcery."

وَلَوْ نَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ كِتٰبًا فِيْ قِرْطَاسٍ فَلَمَسُوْهُ بِاَيْدِيْهِمْ لَقَالَ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْٓا اِنْ هٰذَآ اِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُّبِيْنٌ ⑦

[8] And they say: "Why was not an angel sent down to him (if he really speaks the truth)? Had We sent down an angel, that would have sealed their doom and they would have had no respite (to reflect over it).

وَقَالُوْا لَوْلَآ اُنْزِلَ عَلَيْهِ مَلَكٌ ۭ وَلَوْ اَنْزَلْنَا مَلَكًا لَّقُضِيَ الْاَمْرُ ثُمَّ لَا يُنْظَرُوْنَ ⑧

[9] And had We appointed an angel for a messenger, We would certainly have given him the form of man (since it would

وَلَوْ جَعَلْنٰهُ مَلَكًا لَّجَعَلْنٰهُ رَجُلًا وَّ

have been contrary to the law of life that angels should make themselves visible to the human eye in their spiritual state), and aroused in them doubts similar to those which they now entertain.

لَلَبَسْنَا عَلَيْهِم مَّا يَلْبِسُونَ ۝٩

[10] And apostles before thee have assuredly been likewise laughed to scorn; (even as is done now) but what they had laughed to scorn inevitably recoiled on them.

وَلَقَدِ اسْتُهْزِئَ بِرُسُلٍ مِّن قَبْلِكَ فَحَاقَ بِالَّذِينَ سَخِرُوا مِنْهُم مَّا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِئُونَ ۝١٠

Section 2

[11] Say: (O Prophet) "Go through the land; then see what hath been the end of those who treated the apostles as liars."

قُلْ سِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ ثُمَّ انظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ ۝١١

Proof Afforded by Divine Grace and Mercy

The entire machinery of life in the Universe substantiates that all creation owes its existence to but one Creator and Designer, and that in its running and maintenance, He hath imposed on Himself the exercise of mercy, for, had not all this been bound to a law of mercy there would certainly have been no beauty and no design in this world of creation, nor any usefulness therein. Indeed there is not even a tiny corner in this Universe which does not effectively demonstrate this aspect of existence.

[12] Say: (O Prophet) Whose is all that which is in the heavens and the earth? Say: "God's: He hath imposed on Himself the exercise of Mercy

قُل لِّمَن مَّا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ قُل لِّلَّهِ كَتَبَ عَلَىٰ نَفْسِهِ الرَّحْمَةَ لَيَجْمَعَنَّكُمْ

(as one can see it at work in every direction). Surely will He assemble you all on the Day of Resurrection of which there is no doubt." It is only they who seek their own ruin that will never believe.

إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ الْقِيَـٰمَةِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ ۚ الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَهُمْ فَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

[13] (Mark!) His is all that subsists whether in the night or day and He is the Hearing and the Knowing.

وَلَهُۥ مَا سَكَنَ فِى الَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ ۚ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿١٣﴾

The *Qur'ān* does not adopt dialectics or advance logical poses when it deals with the subject of Divinity or the question of the Unity of God and His attributes, and of the life-hearafter which form the cardinal doctrines of faith. On the other hand, it addresses itself to the inherent nature of man in a straightforward, simple style. Its object is to rouse in him the mood of reflection. It announces that belief in one supreme creator and sustainer of life is ingrained in man and that if man is unmindful of this and in his ignorance, clings to erroneous beliefs, it becomes necessary to awaken in him the sense of reality. It is from this standpoint that everything addressed here has to be viewed.

Who is it who has created this world? Who is it who has spread his graciousness in every direction? Who is it who, while providing sustenance to every object, stands in no need of sustenance for himself? Your very nature will cry out in reply that there exists but one creator and designer of life. If so, what folly is this that people turn away from Him and bow before others?

[14] Say! "How can I choose for patron anyone besides God, the author of the heavens and the earth, who nourisheth all,

قُلْ أَغَيْرَ اللَّهِ أَتَّخِذُ وَلِيًّا فَاطِرِ السَّمَـٰوَٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَهُوَ يُطْعِمُ وَلَا يُطْعَمُ ۗ قُلْ

and Himself needs no nourishing. Say! Assuredly I have been commanded to be the first of those who resign themselves to God, and be not one of the polytheists."

إني أمرت أن أكون أول من أسلم ولا تكونن من المشركين ﴿١٤﴾

[15] Say: "I abhor to be a rebel against my Lord for fear of the punishment of the Great Day (that awaits us all)."

قل إني أخاف إن عصيت ربي عذاب يوم عظيم ﴿١٥﴾

[16] Whosoever has thus averted it, on that Day has indeed invited on himself the mercy of God, and indeed this is a manifest achievement.

من يصرف عنه يومئذ فقد رحمه وذلك الفوز المبين ﴿١٦﴾

[17] If God visits thee with affliction, there is none to remove it but He;—(and who can prevent Him from so doing)—it is He who hath power over everything.

وإن يمسسك الله بضر فلا كاشف له إلا هو وإن يمسسك بخير فهو على كل شيء قدير ﴿١٧﴾

[18] And it is He who hath a supreme hold over His servants. This He doeth in a wise way, fully aware of their condition.

وهو القاهر فوق عباده وهو الحكيم الخبير ﴿١٨﴾

Whose is the strongest testimony? It is God's! Countering all opposition, He causes the truth to prevail and proclaims His endorsement of it.

Here, the *Qur'ān* points to the way of God, or to the law at work in life, which, when there is a conflict between truth and untruth, lets truth eventually prevail and defeats the purpose of those who counter it. It is this law which constitutes the testimony of God in favour of truth.

[19] Ask (them O Prophet)! Whose testimony is the strongest?

قل أي شيء أكبر شهادة قل الله

شهيد بيني وبينكم وأوحي إلي
هذا القرآن لأنذركم به ومن
بلغ أئنكم لتشهدون أن مع
الله آلهة أخرى قل لا أشهد
قل إنما هو إله واحد وإنني
بريء مما تشركون ﴿١٩﴾

Say: "(It is God's.) God is witness between me and you; and (say) also: "This *Qur'ān* hath been revealed to me that I should warn you by it (of the consequences of going against it) and also those whom it may reach." (Now what do you say?) Do you really affirm that there are any gods other than God? Say: "(If this is what you affirm, then) certainly I shall not endorse it." Say: "For my part I affirm that God alone is the one God and that truly I abhor what ye associate with Him. (So let God judge between you and me)."

الذين آتيناهم الكتاب يعرفونه
كما يعرفون أبناءهم الذين خسروا
أنفسهم فهم لا يؤمنون ﴿٢٠﴾

[20] They to whom We have given the Book, (the Jews and the Christians), recognise this truth even as they recognise their own children; it is only they that seek their own ruin who do not believe.

SECTION 3

ومن أظلم ممن افترى على الله
كذبا أو كذب بآياته إنه لا يفلح
الظالمون ﴿٢١﴾

[21] (Mark) Who is more wicked than he who foisteth a lie on God or who treateth His signs as lies. Surely, the wicked will not prosper

ويوم نحشرهم جميعا ثم نقول
للذين أشركوا أين شركاؤكم

[22] Beware the day when We shall gather them all together and say to those who had taken

others for God, "Where are they whom you had taken for gods?"

[23] They cannot then play any mischief and will perforce have to say: "By God, our Lord! We were never polytheists."

[24] Behold! How they will lie against themselves, and how what they had forged will forsake them.

الَّذِينَ كُنتُمْ تَزْعُمُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾
ثُمَّ لَمْ تَكُن فِتْنَتُهُمْ إِلَّا أَن قَالُوا وَ
اللَّهِ رَبِّنَا مَا كُنَّا مُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٢٣﴾
انظُرْ كَيْفَ كَذَبُوا عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ
وَضَلَّ عَنْهُم مَّا كَانُوا
يَفْتَرُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

No truth is ever new. The oldest thing ever living is truth itself. But when this very truth is presented, there are people who gibe at it and say: "What! this is nothing but the same old stuff!"

The Jews and the Christians were communities long-settled in Arabia. They used to narrate stories recorded in the *Torah*. When the *Qur'ān* was delivered, wherein there was reference to the communities and prophets gone before, the Arab polytheists ejaculated: "These are the very same old tales about the people of the past."

[25] (And mark) some of them seem to listen to thee, but We have set veils over their hearts lest they should understand, and a heaviness into their ears; (they are hardened in their obstinacy) so much so, that despite their witnessing all Our signs, they will not believe in them; and indeed, when they come to dispute with thee, these unbelievers will say: "Truly this is nothing but the very same old-world tales (which had already been repeatedly told).

وَمِنْهُم مَّن يَسْتَمِعُ إِلَيْكَ ۖ وَجَعَلْنَا
عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ أَكِنَّةً أَن يَفْقَهُوهُ وَفِي
آذَانِهِمْ وَقْرًا ۚ وَإِن يَرَوْا كُلَّ آيَةٍ
لَّا يُؤْمِنُوا بِهَا ۚ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءُوكَ
يُجَادِلُونَكَ يَقُولُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِنْ
هَٰذَا إِلَّا أَسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٢٥﴾

In verse 25 the *Qur'ān* states: "We have set veils over the

hearts lest they should understand, and a heaviness into their ears." It is the culmination of persistent erring. When one is obsessed with prejudices and grows obstinate, he grows insensitive to reason and refuses either to listen to it or recognise anything rational. It fact he appears to entertain a positive distaste for truth. So in the succeeding verse 26, the *Qur'ān* points out that such people not only avoid listening to the voice of the *Qur'ān* but also prevent others from listening to it. In such a situation, the question is not of distinguishing truth from falsehood, but one of spite.

In verse 29 it reproduces the statement of those who assert that they do not believe in any life hereafter. In verse 32 it observes that this attitude is hardly supportable by reason or insight, for, the life of this world is so ephemeral that it looks as if it is the sport of but a short duration. But is this framework of life then brought into being to serve as but a thing of play for a while only to be reduced to nothing soon after?

The life of this world is described as a "play and pastime" only in relation to the life to follow which is real and lasting, and also because that if action is not to be followed by its inevitable effect, and there is no further life to follow, surely then life of this world will cease to have any permanent value for man.

[26] (And mark!) These people keep others away from (listening to) the *Qur'ān* and themselves withdraw from it; but they harm none except themselves, and they are not conscious of this. (So dense is their perversity!)

وَهُمْ يَنْهَوْنَ عَنْهُ وَيَنْـَٔوْنَ عَنْهُ وَإِن يُهْلِكُونَ إِلَّآ أَنفُسَهُمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾

[27] But if thou were to see when they shall be set before the Fire, they will say: "O! would that we were sent back, we would not treat the signs of our Lord as false but be of the believers."

وَلَوْ تَرَىٰٓ إِذْ وُقِفُوا۟ عَلَى ٱلنَّارِ فَقَالُوا۟ يَـٰلَيْتَنَا نُرَدُّ وَلَا نُكَذِّبَ بِـَٔايَـٰتِ رَبِّنَا وَنَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢٧﴾

بَلْ بَدَا لَهُم مَّا كَانُوا يُخْفُونَ مِن قَبْلُ ۖ وَلَوْ رُدُّوا لَعَادُوا لِمَا نُهُوا عَنْهُ وَإِنَّهُمْ لَكَاذِبُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾

[28] Nay! (This regret of theirs is by no means genuine. On the other hand their regret is) that (the weakness of their heart) which they had hidden hath now been laid bare for them. (It is only to absolve themselves from this charge, that they pretend to regret.) For, should they be sent back, they would certainly revert to what was forbidden to them, since they do not mean what they say.

وَقَالُوا إِنْ هِيَ إِلَّا حَيَاتُنَا الدُّنْيَا وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمَبْعُوثِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾

[29] They also say: "We have no life other than the life of this world and for us there is no life hereafter."

وَلَوْ تَرَىٰ إِذْ وُقِفُوا عَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ ۚ قَالَ أَلَيْسَ هَٰذَا بِالْحَقِّ ۚ قَالُوا بَلَىٰ وَرَبِّنَا ۚ قَالَ فَذُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَكْفُرُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

[30] If thou were to see when they shall be set before their Lord (on the Day of Judgement) and what He will say to them: "Is not this (the life of the hereafter) a reality?" They will say: "Yea! By Our Lord!" He will then say: "Taste then the chastisement for having denied it."

SECTION 4

قَدْ خَسِرَ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِلِقَاءِ اللَّهِ ۖ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَتْهُمُ السَّاعَةُ بَغْتَةً قَالُوا يَا حَسْرَتَنَا عَلَىٰ مَا فَرَّطْنَا فِيهَا وَهُمْ يَحْمِلُونَ أَوْزَارَهُمْ عَلَىٰ ظُهُورِهِمْ ۚ أَلَا سَاءَ مَا يَزِرُونَ ﴿٣١﴾

[31] Ruined shall they stand who regard the meeting with God as baseless. But when the hour (of death) comes upon them suddenly, they will say: "Alack! How neglectful have we been in this behalf," while bearing their burdens upon their back. Mark! How hurtful is what they bear.

[32] The life of this world is nothing but a play and pastime and the life of the hereafter is a bliss for those who are mindful of God. (What a pity!) Can you not understand at least this much?

وَمَا الْحَيٰوةُ الدُّنْيَآ اِلَّا لَعِبٌ وَّلَهْوٌ ط وَلَلدَّارُ الْاٰخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ لِّلَّذِيْنَ يَتَّقُوْنَ اَفَلَا تَعْقِلُوْنَ ﴿٣٢﴾

The *Qur'ān* now turns to the Prophet and advises him not to feel grieved over the behaviour of those who oppose his mission. You are the preacher of truth and will have to be prepared both for acceptance and rejection of what you say. In the zealous pursuit of your case, you wish everyone to take to the straight path. But you should not forget that this does not always happen. Had God so willed, he would surely have brought them all to the path of truth. But His way is to let everyone decide for himself, once the path is pointed out. So grieve not over what they do. For your part, you pursue your mission steadfastly. Only those who are alive (to reason) will respond to your voice of truth. It is futile to cry out to those whose hearts are dead. No call, no argument, no sign and no miracle can bring back to life those who are so dead (to reason). You may ascend the heavens or go down to the depths of the earth, but such people will not accept the truth

[33] (O Prophet!) We indeed know that what they say (out of prejudice or in disregard of truth) grieves thee; but it is not thee whom they charge with falsehood! It is the signs of God which in fact these reprobates hold to ridicule.

قَدْ نَعْلَمُ اِنَّهٗ لَيَحْزُنُكَ الَّذِيْ يَقُوْلُوْنَ فَاِنَّهُمْ لَا يُكَذِّبُوْنَكَ وَلٰكِنَّ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ بِاٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ يَجْحَدُوْنَ ﴿٣٣﴾

[34] (Mark again!) Even before thee there had been people who had charged the messengers of truth with falsehood. But they bore their

وَلَقَدْ كُذِّبَتْ رُسُلٌ مِّنْ قَبْلِكَ فَصَبَرُوْا عَلٰى مَا كُذِّبُوْا وَاُوْذُوْا حَتّٰى اَتٰىهُمْ

charge and the wrong done them with patient endurance till Our help came to them;—for (remember this is the law fixed by God and so) no one can alter the decree of God. Indeed some account of these messengers hath already reached thee.

نَصْرُنَا ۚ وَلَا مُبَدِّلَ لِكَلِمَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَلَقَدْ جَآءَكَ مِن نَّبَإِي۟ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿٣٤﴾

[35] (O Prophet!) If their turning away grieves thee, then, even if thou shouldst seek out an opening into the earth or a ladder to heaven that thou mightest furnish them a sign, (they still will deny thee). Had God so wished, He would surely have brought them all to the path of guidance! Therefore may thou not be of those who have no insight (into the meaning of things).

وَإِن كَانَ كَبُرَ عَلَيْكَ إِعْرَاضُهُمْ فَإِنِ ٱسْتَطَعْتَ أَن تَبْتَغِىَ نَفَقًا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ أَوْ سُلَّمًا فِى ٱلسَّمَآءِ فَتَأْتِيَهُم بِـَٔايَةٍ ۚ وَلَوْ شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ لَجَمَعَهُمْ عَلَى ٱلْهُدَىٰ ۚ فَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ ٱلْجَٰهِلِينَ ﴿٣٥﴾

[36] But they alone will respond who have the willingness to hear. (But from the dead who cannot hear, what is one to expect?) These dead will God raise up, for, to Him they shall return.

إِنَّمَا يَسْتَجِيبُ ٱلَّذِينَ يَسْمَعُونَ ۘ وَٱلْمَوْتَىٰ يَبْعَثُهُمُ ٱللَّهُ ثُمَّ إِلَيْهِ يُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾

To those who ask for signs or miracles in proof of the truth advanced, the *Qur'ān* states that God hath power to do so, and indeed has on several occasions shown his signs; but few have cared to understand them. If any persons really desire to be shown the signs of God, the *Qur'ān* asks them to look at God's creation in the Universe and ponder over them. Are they not all signs of God, the wonders they wish to witness? What else are they if they do not demonstrate to you the attributes of God? Look at the world of animals around you.

Look at the birds in the air. They are divided into communities even like you. Every such community has a way of life peculiar to it. For those who have insight, God's creation is a sufficient proof of the existence of God. They need nothing else to bring the truth home to them.

No sign will be of any avail to him who wilfully spoils the sense of understanding and insight which God has given him, and who, dead to reason, chooses to live in darkness. Such a man cannot find his way. He will not listen to your cry and take to the right path, even if you force him to do so. But truth is not a thing which can be forced upon a man. In verse 42 the *Qur'ān* emphasises that when one persists in error or grows hardened in sin, nothing stimulates repentance in him or brings about improvement in his condition.

[37] They say: "Why has not a sign been sent down to him from his Lord?" Say: "Verily God hath power to send down a sign. But most of them may not care to understand it."

وَقَالُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ آيَةٌ مِّن
رَّبِّهِ قُلْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَادِرٌ عَلَىٰ أَن
يُنَزِّلَ آيَةً وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾

[38] There is not an animal that moveth on the earth or a bird that flieth with its wings, that doth not live in a community of its own even like yours. Nothing have We missed in our scheme of things. Then to their Lord will they all be gathered.

وَمَا مِن دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا طَائِرٍ
يَطِيرُ بِجَنَاحَيْهِ إِلَّا أُمَمٌ أَمْثَالُكُم
مَّا فَرَّطْنَا فِي الْكِتَابِ مِن شَيْءٍ ثُمَّ
إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يُحْشَرُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾

[39] And they who gainsay Our signs are (like those who are) deaf and dumb and grope in darkness. Whosoever God willeth (or who goes contrary to the laws of life or God's will) he lets himself go astray, and whomsoever He pleaseth (or whoever

وَالَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا صُمٌّ وَبُكْمٌ
فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ مَن يَشَإِ اللَّهُ يُضْلِلْهُ

conforms to the laws of life or God's will) He keeps him on the straight path.

وَمَنْ يَّشَاْ يَجْعَلْهُ عَلٰى صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيْمٍ

[40] Say (to them O Prophet): "What think ye? If the chastisement of God were to come upon you, or if the hour (of death) were to come upon you, will ye cry to any other than God? (Answer) if you could speak the truth!

قُلْ اَرَءَيْتَكُمْ اِنْ اَتٰىكُمْ عَذَابُ اللّٰهِ
اَوْ اَتَتْكُمُ السَّاعَةُ اَغَيْرَ اللّٰهِ تَدْعُوْنَ
اِنْ كُنْتُمْ صٰدِقِيْنَ ﴿٤٠﴾

[41] "Surely, to Him alone will you cry; and if He please, He will save you from what makes you cry to Him. And then you would forget those whom you join with Him."

بَلْ اِيَّاهُ تَدْعُوْنَ فَيَكْشِفُ مَا
تَدْعُوْنَ اِلَيْهِ اِنْ شَآءَ وَتَنْسَوْنَ
مَا تُشْرِكُوْنَ ﴿٤١﴾ ع

Section 5

[42] We have sent up to many a community apostles before thee, and subjected them (the communities) to poverty and distress that haply they might humble themselves (before God).

وَلَقَدْ اَرْسَلْنَآ اِلٰٓى اُمَمٍ مِّنْ قَبْلِكَ
فَاَخَذْنٰهُمْ بِالْبَاْسَآءِ وَالضَّرَّآءِ لَعَلَّهُمْ
يَتَضَرَّعُوْنَ ﴿٤٢﴾

[43] Wherefore then did they not humble themselves (before God and repent) when distress from Us came upon them? Their hearts were indeed hardened; for, Satan had inured them to the course of conduct that they followed.

فَلَوْلَآ اِذْ جَآءَهُمْ بَاْسُنَا تَضَرَّعُوْا
وَلٰكِنْ قَسَتْ قُلُوْبُهُمْ وَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ
الشَّيْطٰنُ مَا كَانُوْا يَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿٤٣﴾

Very often a people steeped in sin and high-handedness towards the weak do prosper materially, so much so, that those oppressed very often cry out, "Why do they not suffer consequences of their ill deeds?" They do not suffer for their

evil ways, not because the law of retribution is not at work in life. It is there at work, but it takes its own course. A time is set for everything, and till that hour comes, the result of one's ill deeds does not manifest itself. Verse 44 draws attention to this peculiarity of the law of causation. The *Qur'ān* terms this fact of life as *Imhal* or 'respite' which offers time to the evil doer to turn back from evil and make amends.

[44] So when they had forgotten that wherewith they were admonished, We let open to them the gates of all good things of life until We caught them unaware (in accordance with the law of causation ingrained in the nature of man), even while they were rejoicing in what had been bestowed upon them; so they fell into despair.

فَلَمَّا نَسُوا مَا ذُكِّرُوا بِهِ فَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ أَبْوَابَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا فَرِحُوا بِمَا أُوتُوا أَخَذْنَاهُم بَغْتَةً فَإِذَا هُم مُّبْلِسُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾

[45] And thus it was that those who had done wrong were uprooted. Praise be to God, the Lord of all Creation (who has to protect every section of it against every others).

فَقُطِعَ دَابِرُ الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٤٥﴾

[46] Say: (to them O Prophet): What think ye? If God should take away your hearing and your sight and set a seal on your hearts, what god beside God Himself would restore them to you?" Behold! How in diverse forms do We impress our signs upon them and yet they turn away from them.

قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِنْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ سَمْعَكُمْ وَأَبْصَارَكُمْ وَخَتَمَ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِكُم مَّنْ إِلَٰهٌ غَيْرُ اللَّهِ يَأْتِيكُم بِهِ انظُرْ كَيْفَ نُصَرِّفُ الْآيَاتِ ثُمَّ هُمْ يَصْدِفُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾

[47] Say (to them): "What think ye? Should God's chastisement visit you either suddenly or with due warning, who would perish except the wicked? (So what

قُلْ أَرَأَيْتَكُمْ إِنْ أَتَاكُمْ عَذَابُ اللَّهِ

has come upon you that you do not desist from evil?)"

[48] (And our way is this), We do not send apostles except as bearers of glad tidings or as warners. And whoso shall believe and amend, on them shall come no fear, nor shall they grieve.

[49] And they who treat our revelations as false shall for their transgression receive chastisement.

بَغْتَةً أَوْ جَهْرَةً هَلْ يُهْلَكُ إِلَّا الْقَوْمُ الظَّٰلِمُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾
وَمَا نُرْسِلُ الْمُرْسَلِينَ إِلَّا مُبَشِّرِينَ
وَمُنذِرِينَ فَمَنْ ءَامَنَ وَأَصْلَحَ فَلَا
خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾
وَالَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا يَمَسُّهُمُ الْعَذَابُ
بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْسُقُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾

In the matter of faith, the universal error into which man has fallen is that he yearns to witness something supernatural, something amazing. He is not easily pleased with the simplicity which always underlies truth. It is this weakness in man which makes him enamoured of superstition and it is this that is responsible for his deification of God's prophets.

The *Qur'ān* came forward to put a stop to all such heresy. In verse 50, the *Qur'ān* defines clearly the position of the Prophet himself. He is asked to announce emphatically that his claim is nothing else than that of a bearer of the message of God which points to the path of truth and that he is but to follow it himself implicitly and call upon others to do likewise, and that his role as prophet is nothing beyond this.

[50] Say (to them). "I do not assert before you that I possess the treasures of God, neither do I assert that I know things unseen; nor do I assert that I am indeed an angel; I simply follow what is revealed to me, (and invite you also to it).

And ask them: "Shall those

قُل لَّا أَقُولُ لَكُمْ عِندِى خَزَآئِنُ اللَّهِ
وَلَا أَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبَ وَلَا أَقُولُ لَكُمْ إِنِّى
مَلَكٌ إِنْ أَتَّبِعُ إِلَّا مَا يُوحَىٰ إِلَىَّ ط

who see (and have insight into the meaning of things) and those who cannot see (or are blind to the reality of things) be on a par with each other? Will ye not then reflect?"

قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الْأَعْمَىٰ وَالْبَصِيرُ ۚ أَفَلَا تَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾

Section 6

[51] (O Prophet! Leave alone those who are incorrigible). Warn only those who fear their being rounded up before their Lord that for them there shall be no protector nor intercessor other than He; (warn them) that haply they may take heed.

وَأَنذِرْ بِهِ الَّذِينَ يَخَافُونَ أَن يُحْشَرُوا إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ ۙ لَيْسَ لَهُم مِّن دُونِهِ وَلِيٌّ وَلَا شَفِيعٌ لَّعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ ﴿٥١﴾

[52] And do not keep away from you those who cry to their Lord in the morning and in the evening seeking His grace. Thou art not accountable for anything that they may have done, even as they are not accountable for anything that you may have done. Were thou to keep them away from thee, then thou indeed will be of the unjust.

وَلَا تَطْرُدِ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُم بِالْغَدَاةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ ۖ مَا عَلَيْكَ مِنْ حِسَابِهِم مِّن شَيْءٍ وَمَا مِنْ حِسَابِكَ عَلَيْهِم مِّن شَيْءٍ فَتَطْرُدَهُمْ فَتَكُونَ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٥٢﴾

In verses 51 to 54 two principles of religious reform advocated by the Prophet's mission are brought to mind.

One is, (Verse 51) that it is not worthwhile to pursue those who are decidedly incorrigible and that instead it will be worthwhile to concentrate on the reformation of those who have manifested, in some form or another, the strength of faith.

These may appear to be lowly and destitute. But if they could be strengthened in righteousness, they will prove an asset to your mission. This lays down the principle to be followed by reformers that they should turn their primary attention to the reform of those who display some talent for reform although they may be few in number and in depressed state, and not to waste time and energy on those who have lost the talent to receive guidance and improve, although their number is large and seem prosperous in life.

In the earliest stages of the mission of Islam, it was only the weak and the depressed who came forward to accept it. In fact, it was this class of people who always responded readily to the call of truth. The annals of the time record that the polytheists of Mecca who were materially well-off used to taunt the Prophet saying that he was surrounded with but the despicable lowly lot and that it was because of this that they disdained to sit in their company. It was in response to such observations that the verse was delivered calling upon the Prophet not to withdraw from the company of the lowly who were devoted to God and whose only weakness was that tney did not live in opulence, just to please tne arrogant wealthy.

Secondly, in verse 54, the *Qur'ān* calls upon the Prophet to be kinly towards those who through sheer ignorance may have fallen into any lapse and offer them tidings of Divine mercy and forgiveness.

[53] (And Mark!) Thus have We made some envious of others with the result that those (who are in affluent circumstances taunt the poor followers of the Faith with words), "Are these they to whom God hath chosen for His grace from amongst us?" (Tell them) "Doth not God know those who appreciate the graciousness of God?"

وَكَذَٰلِكَ فَتَنَّا بَعْضَهُم بِبَعْضٍ لِّيَقُولُوٓا۟ أَهَٰٓؤُلَآءِ مَنَّ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِم مِّنۢ بَيْنِنَآ ۗ أَلَيْسَ ٱللَّهُ بِأَعْلَمَ بِٱلشَّٰكِرِينَ ﴿٥٣﴾

[54] When those who now believe in Our signs come to thee, say (to them kindly): "Peace on you! Your Lord hath made Mercy incumbent on Himself, so that if any one of you commit a wrong in ignorance and afterwards repent and make amends, surely you will find Him, forgiving, merciful."

وإذا جاءك الذين يؤمنون بآيتنا
فقل سلم عليكم كتب ربكم على
نفسه الرحمة أنه من عمل منكم
سوء بجهالة ثم تاب من بعده و
أصلح فأنه غفور رحيم ﴿٥٤﴾

[55] So clearly do We set forth our revelations in order that the way of the wicked might become easily distinguishable (from that of the righteous).

وكذلك نفصل الأيت ولتستبين
سبيل المجرمين ﴿٥٥﴾

Section 7

[56] Say (to those who deny the truth): "I am forbidden to show devotion to those whom you call upon beside God." Say also: "I shall not yield to your desires, for then I shall have gone astray, and not be of those who are guided aright."

قل إني نهيت أن أعبد الذين
تدعون من دون الله قل لا أتبع
أهواءكم قد ضللت إذا وما أنا
من المهتدين ﴿٥٦﴾

[57] Say: "I take my stand on the clear evidence furnished by my Lord (or the right path He hath shown me) and which you treat as false. (It is for God to decide between us. You ask for immediate judgement from God, but) what ye ask for is not in my power to hasten; the final word resteth with none but God: He declareth the truth and

قل إني على بينة من ربي وكذبتم
به ما عندي ما تستعجلون به إن
الحكم إلا لله يقص الحق و هو

He is the best Judge (between truth and falsehood)." خَيْرُ الْفَاصِلِينَ ﴿٥٧﴾

In verse 57 the Prophet is asked to state: "I take my stand on the clear evidence furnished by my Lord." Similar statements occur elsewhere in the *Qur'ān*. They all emphasise that the path of life sponsored by Revelation is the path of certitude based on right knowledge, and that disbelief can only be based on prejudice and imagination. Verse 50 has already pointed out that those who see and those who cannot see shall not be on a par with each other.

The *Qur'ān* points out that two ways are open to man— one of doubts and surmises, the other of insight and conviction. Those who do not believe in God and the life to come or are engrossed in the vain formalities of mere ritual, they have no argument in their favour. The utmost they can say is, "We know not; we have no proofs to advance; we cannot go beyond the bounds of our senses." So, their attitude is based on surmises. But the case of one who proclaims that his attitude rests on absolute conviction is something different. He knows what he speaks out and is convinced that he speaks the truth. Shadows of doubt and surmise do not cross his mind. The question, therefore, before you is this: which way are you to turn to? Are you to follow him who says he knows nothing or turn to him who asserts that he is conviced in his mind that what he says is the truth? Shall those who see and those who see not be on a par with each other?

In the same verse, reference is made to the subject of speedy retribution. Those who denied the message of the Prophet said to him: "You speak of Divine decrees overtaking those who do not follow Divine injunctions. If that is so, when are they to be executed?" To them the Prophet replied: "Were it possible for me personally to pronounce and execute such decrees, I would have done so instantly. But the matter rests with God, and He acts according to a law fixed by Him. Every thing has its term set for it; every action takes its time to produce its effect; and the world knows with whom lies success."

[58] Say (O Prophet): "If what you seek lieth in my power to hasten on, the matter between me and you would have long been settled."

قُلْ لَّوْ اَنَّ عِنْدِيْ مَا تَسْتَعْجِلُوْنَ بِهٖ
لَقُضِيَ الْاَمْرُ بَيْنِيْ وَبَيْنَكُمْ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ
اَعْلَمُ بِالظّٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿٥٨﴾

[59] And with Him are the keys of the unseen; none knoweth them but He. He knoweth whatsoever is in the land and in the sea; not a leaf falleth but He knoweth it; and there is not a grain in the shadows of the earth, nor a thing green or sere which hath not been taken note of in the luminous Book (of Divine Knowledge).

وَعِنْدَهٗ مَفَاتِحُ الْغَيْبِ لَا يَعْلَمُهَآ
اِلَّا هُوَ ۗ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ ۗ
وَمَا تَسْقُطُ مِنْ وَّرَقَةٍ اِلَّا يَعْلَمُهَا
وَلَا حَبَّةٍ فِيْ ظُلُمٰتِ الْاَرْضِ وَلَا رَطْبٍ
وَّلَا يَابِسٍ اِلَّا فِيْ كِتٰبٍ مُّبِيْنٍ ﴿٥٩﴾

[60] And (mark) it is He who layeth you to rest in the night and knoweth what you have merited by day; then He waketh you in the day (and so on) that the prescribed term (of life) may be fulfilled. Then (in the end) unto Him shall you return, when He will declare to you what ye have wrought.

وَهُوَ الَّذِيْ يَتَوَفّٰىكُمْ بِالَّيْلِ وَيَعْلَمُ
مَا جَرَحْتُمْ بِالنَّهَارِ ثُمَّ يَبْعَثُكُمْ فِيْهِ
لِيُقْضٰٓى اَجَلٌ مُّسَمًّى ۚ ثُمَّ اِلَيْهِ
مَرْجِعُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ
تَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿٦٠﴾

SECTION 8

[61] And His will prevaileth over His servants and He sets guardians over you till death approaches any of you and our messengers cause him to die, and fail not (in so doing).

وَهُوَ الْقَاهِرُ فَوْقَ عِبَادِهٖ وَيُرْسِلُ عَلَيْكُمْ
حَفَظَةً ۗ حَتّٰٓى اِذَا جَآءَ اَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ
تَوَفَّتْهُ رُسُلُنَا وَهُمْ لَا يُفَرِّطُوْنَ ﴿٦١﴾

The *Qur'ān* now speaks of the proof of its truth as furnished by the very nature of man and its varying aspects. It asks: Who rescueth you from disturbances in land and sea and answereth your cry and respondeth to your wailings? Whenever you are in straits, you cry out that if you are rescued, you would

be truly grateful to God and live the life of grateful people But when the hour of trouble passes, you soon forget what you had promised to do and revert to your evil ways. In verse 65, the *Qur'ān* suggests that internal dissension or division into groups is a form of Divine chastisement and not pleasing to God. (Mawlana Azad here observes that such is the fate that has overtaken even the Muslims in the course of their history.)

[62] Then are they returned to God, their true Master? Is not the final word His? Swiftest is He of those who take account.

ثُمَّ رُدُّوٓا إِلَى اللَّهِ مَوْلَىٰهُمُ الْحَقِّ ۚ أَلَا لَهُ الْحُكْمُ وَهُوَ أَسْرَعُ الْحَاسِبِينَ ٦٢

[63] Say (to them O Prophet): "Who rescueth you from the disturbances in land and sea when in humbleness you cry out from within, 'if we escape from this, we shall not forget Him but be truly grateful?'

قُلْ مَن يُنَجِّيكُم مِّن ظُلُمَاتِ الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ تَدْعُونَهُ تَضَرُّعًا وَخُفْيَةً لَّئِنْ أَنجَانَا مِنْ هَٰذِهِ لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الشَّاكِرِينَ ٦٣

[64] Say: "Even when God rescueth you from this and from every strait, ye nevertheless, set up peers for Him!"

قُلِ اللَّهُ يُنَجِّيكُم مِّنْهَا وَمِن كُلِّ كَرْبٍ ثُمَّ أَنتُمْ تُشْرِكُونَ ٦٤

[65] Say: "It is He who hath power to send chastisement on you from above you or from beneath your feet or raise dissensions among you so as to let you taste the oppression, one of another." See how in diverse forms do We set forth our admonitions that haply they may grow wise.

قُلْ هُوَ الْقَادِرُ عَلَىٰٓ أَن يَبْعَثَ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابًا مِّن فَوْقِكُمْ أَوْ مِن تَحْتِ أَرْجُلِكُمْ أَوْ يَلْبِسَكُمْ شِيَعًا وَيُذِيقَ بَعْضَكُم بَأْسَ بَعْضٍ ۗ انظُرْ كَيْفَ نُصَرِّفُ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَفْقَهُونَ ٦٥

[66] But (O Prophet!) It is thy people who have counted it (the Qur'ānic pronouncement) as baseless while this is a certainty. Say: "(You may

وَكَذَّبَ بِهِ قَوْمُكَ وَهُوَ الْحَقُّ ۚ قُلْ

have your own view): I am not guardian over you.

لست عليكم بوكيل (٦٦)

[67] "For everything a time is set and by and by, you shall know it."

لكل نبإ مستقر وسوف تعلمون (٦٧)

When people who have no urge to seek out truth and who try to twist it to serve their purposes indulge in spurious argumentation, it would be well for the truth-loving to keep aloof from them; for, truth does not emerge through wilful controversy over it. Indeed those who make controversy their pastime hardly ever succeed in finding truth. (Vide Q. 2 : 258).

[68] When thou seest those who are engaged in making a jest of our revelations, keep away from them till they turn their talk to some other matter; but should Satan draw thee into their talk unaware, then get away from the unrighteous lot the moment you grow conscious (of what they have been saying).

وإذا رأيت الذين يخوضون في آياتنا فأعرض عنهم حتى يخوضوا في حديث غيره وإما ينسينك الشيطان فلا تقعد بعد الذكرى مع القوم الظالمين (٦٨)

[69] No responsibility lieth on the righteous on their account except to admonish them that haply they may abstain (from evil discourse).

وما على الذين يتقون من حسابهم من شيء ولكن ذكرى لعلهم يتقون (٦٩)

[70] And (O Prophet!) leave alone those who have made of their religion a sport and a pastime and whom the life of this world hath deluded; but continue your admonition so that no one shall be caught, by what he hath himself earned, on the day when for him there shall be neither friend nor

وذر الذين اتخذوا دينهم لعبا ولهوا وغرتهم الحياة الدنيا وذكر به أن تبسل نفس بما كسبت ليس لها

intercessor save God and when even if he were to offer every ransom (for his short-comings) it shall not be accepted from him. Those who are caught by what they have themselves worked for (since every one will have to face the consequence of his evil deeds) shall have boiling water for their drink and shall have a painful chastisement for having rejected the truth.

مِنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ وَلِيٌّ وَّلَا شَفِيْعٌ ۚ وَاِنْ تَعْدِلْ كُلَّ عَدْلٍ لَّا يُؤْخَذْ مِنْهَا ۗ اُولٰٓئِكَ الَّذِيْنَ اُبْسِلُوْا بِمَا كَسَبُوْا ۚ لَهُمْ شَرَابٌ مِّنْ حَمِيْمٍ وَّعَذَابٌ اَلِيْمٌۢ بِمَا كَانُوْا يَكْفُرُوْنَ

The believer always keeps the light of Revelation for his guidance. So he never strays from the right royal road of righteous living or goodness. But a disbeliever has no light whatsoever before him. He is like one who, lost in a wilderness, has to wander about in perplexity. Now he runs in one direction, now in another, and has no definite road before him to traverse.

Ponder over this illustration and you will catch the significance of the difference between faith and denial of it.

Verse 72 introduces the subject of *Takhliq-bil-Haq* or 'creation in right form' The idea underlying is that everything is shaped to subserve some specific purpose in life, the objective being to evolve and bring into being an ordered, well-regulated frame-work of life, full of beauty. (Vide Q. 3 : 190).

All that we can apprehend through the five senses which man is gifted with is styled by the *Qur'ān* as the world of what is manifest, and all that we cannot apprehend through these senses as that of the unmanifest.

Section 9

[71] Say: (O Prophet) "Shall we cry to aught besides God that can neither

قُلْ اَنَدْعُوْا مِنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ مَا لَا

help us nor hurt us, and shall We turn upon our heels after God hath shown us the right path, even like him whom the devil has drifted into the wilderness to wander bewildered at a time when his companions are beckoning him to the right path (crying out 'Come to us')"? Say: (to them): "The way pointed out by God is the only right way (which is there from the very beginning of life), and We have been commanded to resign ourselves to the Lord of all Being,

يَنْفَعُنَا وَلَا يَضُرُّنَا وَنُرَدُّ عَلَىٰٓ أَعْقَابِنَا
بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَىٰنَا ٱللَّهُ كَٱلَّذِى ٱسْتَهْوَتْهُ
ٱلشَّيَٰطِينُ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ حَيْرَانَ لَهُۥٓ
أَصْحَٰبٌ يَدْعُونَهُۥٓ إِلَى ٱلْهُدَى ٱئْتِنَا
قُلْ إِنَّ هُدَى ٱللَّهِ هُوَ ٱلْهُدَىٰ وَ
أُمِرْنَا لِنُسْلِمَ لِرَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٧١﴾

[72] "And to observe prayer and abstain from evil; for, He it is to whom ye shall be gathered;

وَأَنْ أَقِيمُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَٱتَّقُوهُ وَهُوَ
ٱلَّذِىٓ إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾

[73] "He it is who in right form created the heavens and the earth and He it is who, when he sayeth 'Be', then, it is.

وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ
بِٱلْحَقِّ وَيَوْمَ يَقُولُ كُن فَيَكُونُ ﴿٧٣﴾

[74] His word is the truth; and His the sovereignty on the day when the trumpet shall blow—Knower alike of the seen and the unseen and He is the Wise, the Cognizant."

قَوْلُهُ ٱلْحَقُّ وَلَهُ ٱلْمُلْكُ يَوْمَ يُنفَخُ
فِى ٱلصُّورِ عَٰلِمُ ٱلْغَيْبِ وَٱلشَّهَٰدَةِ
وَهُوَ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ٱلْخَبِيرُ ﴿٧٤﴾

The *Qur'ān* now refers to the question of the proof of the unity of God. In this connection, it refers to what had dawned on the Prophet Abraham (may peace be on Him!) and what was always the subject of presentation in the messages delivered by all prophets.

God sent Abraham at a time when the people of Niniveh and Babylon with a glorious past, were steeped in superstitious

veneration of celestial bodies and had set up in the city of Ur shrines dedicated to the Sun and the Moon and Venus to which resorted huge numbers of men and women in the mornings and the evenings for ceremonial devotion.

But true devotion to God had fascinated the mind and heart of Abraham. The idea of Divine Supremacy had so seized him that it dispelled all shadows of ignorance and indifference lying in the path of the right apprehension of Divinity. What manner of approach was it which suggested itself to him to catch this Reality? The manner in which the *Qur'ān* describes this phenomenon is marvellous. It is indeed graphic!

In the evening, there appeared in the sky the star Venus peeping out in splendour through the veils of night. Bearing in mind the prevalent beliefs, Abraham cried out, "This bright star is my Lord, for we worship its image". But when after a while, it set and disappeared from view, he cried out, "That which sets or disappears cannot be my Lord and I cannot worship it, for, anything which subserves the law of rise and fall is but a servant and never a Lord, a dependent and never a master".

Then there appeared on the horizon breaking through the darkness, the bright Moon. Abraham ejaculated, "This is my Lord". The moon also set and disappeared.

In the morning there appeared the refulgent Sun throwing its light all over the globe. This was the biggest of the stars in the heavens. Even this appeared to Abraham as rising to the dictates of some one superior to it. He felt that there was no stability even in its light. At first it began slowly to grow in intensity and having reached its climax, there was a gradual subsidence culminating in its final disappearance.

Abraham said to his people: "No! none of these could be our Lord, for, all of them demonstrate through their condition of life that they are not by any means free agents but that on the other hand they are mere dependents of some one superior to them all, that they are not masters but mere servants, and that some Supreme Being is holding us all together under His

subjection and bending us all to subserve His purposes". So Abraham, out of his firm conviction proclaimed, "I am only His who is the creator of all that I behold. I cannot associate therefore anything with Him and cannot be numbered among those who do so".

When his people remonstrated with him on what he had proclaimed, Abraham spoke out: "Do not impose your false gods on me. Mark! We are now divided into two parties, one is my own self denying every belief in them and finding no argument in support of any such belief. The other is that of you. You worship all these things and have no argument in support of what you do. Tell me which of the two ways is sound."

We must show devotion where it is justified by reason and never where it is merely based on custom and blind imitation. What had dawned on the mind of Abraham was positive enlightenment. That was the basis of all subsequent enlightenment, the source of the light which has illumined the path of life in the course of human history.

[75] Call to mind the occasion when said Abraham to his father Azar: "Dost thou take idols for God? Verily I see thee and thy people in manifest error."

وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَٰهِيمُ لِأَبِيهِ ءَازَرَ أَتَتَّخِذُ أَصْنَامًا ءَالِهَةً ۖ إِنِّىٓ أَرَىٰكَ وَقَوْمَكَ فِى ضَلَٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٧٥﴾

[76] And in like manner did We make Abraham aware of the governance of the heavens and the earth that he may be of the convinced.

وَكَذَٰلِكَ نُرِىٓ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ مَلَكُوتَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَلِيَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُوقِنِينَ ﴿٧٦﴾

[77] And when the night spread its darkness over him, he beheld a star. Said he: "This is my Lord"; but when it set he said: "I love not the things which set."

فَلَمَّا جَنَّ عَلَيْهِ ٱلَّيْلُ رَءَا كَوْكَبًا ۖ قَالَ هَٰذَا رَبِّى ۖ فَلَمَّآ أَفَلَ قَالَ لَآ أُحِبُّ ٱلْءَافِلِينَ ﴿٧٧﴾

[78] Then when he beheld the Moon shining forth, he said:

فَلَمَّا رَءَا ٱلْقَمَرَ بَازِغًا قَالَ هَٰذَا رَبِّى

"This is my Lord"; but when even this set, he said: "Surely, if my Lord guide me not, I shall be of the people who have gone astray."

فَلَمَّآ أَفَلَ قَالَ لَئِن لَّمْ يَهْدِنِى رَبِّى لَأَكُونَنَّ مِنَ ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلضَّآلِّينَ ﴿٧٨﴾

[79] Then when he beheld the Sun shining forth, he said: "This is my Lord; this is indeed great"; but when this set he said: "O my people! I disassociate myself from you in joining others with God. Single-mindedly do I now turn my face

فَلَمَّا رَءَا ٱلشَّمْسَ بَازِغَةً قَالَ هَٰذَا رَبِّى هَٰذَآ أَكْبَرُ فَلَمَّآ أَفَلَتْ قَالَ يَٰقَوْمِ إِنِّى بَرِىٓءٌ مِّمَّا تُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٧٩﴾

[80] "Towards Him who originated the heavens and the earth and I am not of the polytheists."

إِنِّى وَجَّهْتُ وَجْهِىَ لِلَّذِى فَطَرَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ حَنِيفًا وَمَآ أَنَا۠ مِنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٨٠﴾

[81] But when his people remonstrated with him, he said: "Do ye remonstrate with me in respect of God, although He hath shown me the right path, and I fear not them whom ye join with Him but what my Lord willeth (me fear). The knowledge of my Lord embraceth all things. Will ye not then take heed (even after this clear demonstration of truth)?

وَحَآجَّهُۥ قَوْمُهُۥ قَالَ أَتُحَٰٓجُّوٓنِّى فِى ٱللَّهِ وَقَدْ هَدَىٰنِ وَلَآ أَخَافُ مَا تُشْرِكُونَ بِهِۦٓ إِلَّآ أَن يَشَآءَ رَبِّى شَيْـًٔا وَسِعَ رَبِّى كُلَّ شَىْءٍ عِلْمًا أَفَلَا تَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٨١﴾

[82] "Why should I fear them whom you have joined with God when you fear not to join them with Him for which He hath not sent down to you any authority? Which (way) then of either of the two parties is the way of peace, if ye but know it?"

وَكَيْفَ أَخَافُ مَآ أَشْرَكْتُمْ وَلَا تَخَافُونَ أَنَّكُمْ أَشْرَكْتُم بِٱللَّهِ مَا لَمْ يُنَزِّلْ بِهِۦ عَلَيْكُمْ سُلْطَٰنًا فَأَىُّ ٱلْفَرِيقَيْنِ أَحَقُّ بِٱلْأَمْنِ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾

[83] They who believe and have not tarnished their faith with wrong-doing—for them is peace; and it is they who are on the right path.

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَلَمْ يَلْبِسُوا إِيمَانَهُمْ بِظُلْمٍ
أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمُ الْأَمْنُ وَهُمْ مُهْتَدُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾

SECTION 10

[84] This was the line of argument which We laid down for Abraham to follow against his people. We raise in rank whomsoever We please, (by investing him with the knowledge of Reality). Verily thy Lord is Wise, Knowing.

وَتِلْكَ حُجَّتُنَا آتَيْنَاهَا إِبْرَاهِيمَ عَلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ
نَرْفَعُ دَرَجَاتٍ مَنْ نَشَاءُ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ
حَكِيمٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٨٣﴾

[85] And We gave him Isaac and (to Isaac his son) Jacob; each one of them We guided aright, even as We had guided Noah before and guided (in later times) his descendants, David and Solomon, and Job and Joseph and Moses and Aaron. Thus do We reward those who do good.

وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُ إِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ كُلًّا هَدَيْنَا
وَنُوحًا هَدَيْنَا مِنْ قَبْلُ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِهِ
دَاوُودَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ وَأَيُّوبَ وَيُوسُفَ وَمُوسَىٰ
وَهَارُونَ وَكَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٨٤﴾

[86] And Likewise (did We guide) Zacharia, and John and Jesus, and Elias—all of the righteous;

وَزَكَرِيَّا وَيَحْيَىٰ وَعِيسَىٰ وَإِلْيَاسَ
كُلٌّ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ ﴿٨٥﴾

[87] And also Ishmael and Elisha and Jonah and Lot: All these We favoured above the rest of mankind!

وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَالْيَسَعَ وَيُونُسَ وَلُوطًا
وَكُلًّا فَضَّلْنَا عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٨٦﴾

[88] And also We guided aright some of their fathers and their offspring and their brethren. We selected all these and guided them to the straight path.—

وَمِنْ آبَائِهِمْ وَذُرِّيَّاتِهِمْ وَإِخْوَانِهِمْ وَ
اجْتَبَيْنَاهُمْ وَهَدَيْنَاهُمْ إِلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٨٧﴾

[89] The very path of God where-

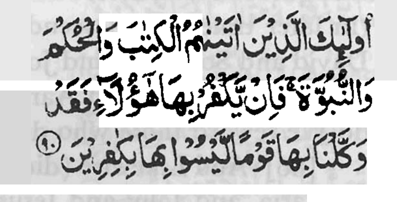
ذَٰلِكَ هُدَى اللَّهِ يَهْدِي بِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ

with doth He guide whomsoever of His servants He willeth. But if they had ever joined others with God, assuredly, all (the good) that they had done would have gone to waste.

مِنْ عِبَادِهِ وَلَوْ أَشْرَكُوا لَحَبِطَ عَنْهُم مَّا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾

O Prophet! all the descendents of Abraham (peace be on Him) who are mentioned here followed this very path of truth which indeed is the path of God. They were those whom God had invested with the exalted role of prophethood, and given the Book. So, O Prophet! You too walk in their footsteps. Soon, God will raise up a body of believers who will undertake the responsibility of following this path and preserving its integrity and upholding the cause of truth. And it so happened that such a body of the right-living was formed of the refugees from Mecca and those who gave refuge to them at Madina, the Mahajirin and the Ansar who fulfilled this high purpose.

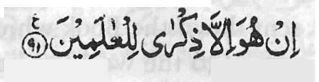
[90] These are they whom We gave the Book and invested with authority and prophethood. And if these people (the polytheists) have no faith in them, We have decided to entrust these (privileges) to a people who do not deny faith in them (and who are indeed their admirers).



[91] These (Prophets mentioned above) are they whom God hath guided. So take to their way. Say: "No reward do I ask of you for pursuing it. This is indeed the way of the Prophets and is meant to be followed by all mankind. (So when such is the instruction of God, it is

أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ هَدَى اللَّهُ فَبِهُدَاهُمُ اقْتَدِهْ قُل لَّا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا

not possible for me to deviate from my duty, however much you may vex me.)"



The *Qur'ān* now counters the observation of those who used to say: "No scroll from God had ever been delivered to man. It is but an empty claim".

Those who had no faith in Revelation were of two categories. One was of the learned among the people of the Book. They of course did not reject all Revelation; but through prejudice and malice they denied that distinction to the *Qur'ān* and asserted that the word of God was never revealed in this form. Since this was a class of literates, the second category, the ignorant masses, simply followed their view.

The *Qur'ān* counters the charge firstly of the learned from among the people of the Book by this argument: If God never sent down any revelation, then what was the *Torah* that was sent down to Moses, the words of which the learned among the Jews so reverently copy, and only a part of which they disclose to the common folk and keep back the rest to themselves?

The *Qur'ān* then goes on to state that it is but the word of Truth. It calls upon the people of Mecca to abstain from evil, and invites them to good ways of living. It points out that through its message it has raised up a body of people who are firm in their devotion to God. It then asks: Can one who is the bearer of such a message ever foist a lie on God and be guilty of so heinous a sin?

Verses 95 to 99 are a direct reply to those who totally reject all revelation.

SECTION 11

[92] No proper estimate do they form of God when they say: "Nothing hath God sent down to man." (If this is so), ask (them), "Who

وَمَا قَدَرُوا اللّٰهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهٖٓ اِذْ قَالُوْا
مَآ اَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ عَلٰى بَشَرٍ مِّنْ شَيْءٍ ؕ قُلْ

sent down the Book which Moses presented to the world, a light and guidance to man, and which ye set down on parchment, revealing but a part while concealing the most of it, and through which ye have been taught what ye did not know, neither ye nor your fathers?" Tell them: "God!" Then leave them to their trifling babble.

مَنْ أَنزَلَ الْكِتَٰبَ الَّذِي جَآءَ بِهِۦ
مُوسَىٰ نُورًا وَهُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ تَجْعَلُونَهُۥ
قَرَاطِيسَ تُبْدُونَهَا وَتُخْفُونَ كَثِيرًا
وَعُلِّمْتُم مَّا لَمْ تَعْلَمُوٓا أَنتُمْ وَلَآ ءَابَآؤُكُمْ
قُلِ اللَّهُ ثُمَّ ذَرْهُمْ فِي خَوْضِهِمْ يَلْعَبُونَ ﴿٩٢﴾

[93] And this (the *Qur'ān*) is the Book which (now) We have sent down (even as We did the *Torah*): it is a perennial blessing confirming that which was before it, that therewith thou mayest warn the mother-city and those who dwell around it. They who believe in the life-hereafter believe in it (the *Qur'ān*) and are strict in their observance of prayer.

وَهَٰذَا كِتَٰبٌ أَنزَلْنَٰهُ مُبَارَكٌ مُّصَدِّقُ
الَّذِي بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَلِتُنذِرَ أُمَّ الْقُرَىٰ
وَمَنْ حَوْلَهَا وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ
يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِۦ وَهُمْ عَلَىٰ صَلَاتِهِمْ يُحَافِظُونَ ﴿٩٣﴾

[94] And who does greater wrong than he who invents a lie against God or says: "A revelation hath come to me," when nothing came to him as a revelation; or who says (arrogantly): "I can reveal the like of what God hath revealed." Wouldst thou only behold the situation when the wrong-doers are in the throes of death and the angels stretch out their hands saying, "Yield up your souls! This day shall ye be recompensed with a humiliat-

وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ افْتَرَىٰ عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا
أَوْ قَالَ أُوحِيَ إِلَيَّ وَلَمْ يُوحَ إِلَيْهِ شَيْءٌ وَمَن
قَالَ سَأُنزِلُ مِثْلَ مَآ أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ وَلَوْ تَرَىٰٓ
إِذِ الظَّٰلِمُونَ فِي غَمَرَٰتِ الْمَوْتِ وَالْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ
بَاسِطُوٓا أَيْدِيهِمْ أَخْرِجُوٓا أَنفُسَكُمُ الْيَوْمَ

ing chastisement for imputing to God what was untrue, and for insolently treating light of His signs?"

تُجْزَوْنَ عَذَابَ الْهُونِ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَقُولُونَ
عَلَى اللَّهِ غَيْرَ الْحَقِّ وَكُنتُمْ عَنْ آيَاتِهِ تَسْتَكْبِرُونَ ﴿٩٣﴾

[95] (And God will say to them) "We now see you come back to us solitarily as We first created you, leaving behind all the good things that We had given you, and We see not with you your intercessors, who, you used to fancy were helping you in your affairs. Indeed, your (vaunted) ties have now been severed and fallen from you are those on whom you had depended."

وَلَقَدْ جِئْتُمُونَا فُرَادَىٰ كَمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ
أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَتَرَكْتُم مَّا خَوَّلْنَاكُمْ
وَرَاءَ ظُهُورِكُمْ ۖ وَمَا نَرَىٰ مَعَكُمْ
شُفَعَاءَكُمُ الَّذِينَ زَعَمْتُمْ أَنَّهُمْ
فِيكُمْ شُرَكَاءُ ۚ لَقَد تَّقَطَّعَ بَيْنَكُمْ
وَضَلَّ عَنكُم مَّا كُنتُمْ تَزْعُمُونَ ﴿٩٤﴾

Now follows the reply to those who rejected all revelations. Referring to their denial, the *Qur'ān* had in verse 91 stated, "No proper estimate do they form of God when they say: 'Nothing hath God sent down to man'." This was but a terse statement, the clarification whereof is now furnished.

When God is regarded as the nourisher and sustainer of life and His graciousness provides every means of its growth and development, can you not ponder over the implications of this fact of life? When He has provided everything to sustain your physical existence, can you believe that He has done nothing to sustain your spiritual existence as well?

The means of sustaining the spirit is always in the form of revelation. If you say that this was not necessary, then you have really failed to understand the purposes underlying all creation and you wish to bring God down from the exalted position which the life of the entire Universe admits or argues for Him.

How can He who gives life to the earth that is dead, fail to revive the soul that is dead in you? Do you think that He, who through His bright stars guideth you in the darkness of the land and the sea, leave your soul to drift and provide no light to offer guidance to it? You do not wonder when you behold flourishing fields of corn or when you behold rain coming down to water them. Why should you then be seized with amazement when you are told that likewise means are provided for the sustenance of the soul of man in the form of revelation? Pity! You have failed to appreciate the mercy and providence of God.

Section 12

[96] Verily it is God who splitteth the seed grain and the date stone (to put forth from within them living plants). He bringeth forth the living from the dead and the dead from the living! This is God (the wise Providence). Why then do ye turn aside (from Him and wander aimlessly)?

إِنَّ اللَّهَ فَالِقُ الْحَبِّ وَالنَّوَىٰ ۖ يُخْرِجُ الْحَيَّ مِنَ الْمَيِّتِ وَمُخْرِجُ الْمَيِّتِ مِنَ الْحَيِّ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمُ اللَّهُ ۖ فَأَنَّىٰ تُؤْفَكُونَ ﴿٩٦﴾

[97] He causeth the dawn to burst forth (to usher in the day) and hath ordained the night for rest, and the sun and the moon for computing time. This is an arrangement made by one Mighty and Wise.

فَالِقُ الْإِصْبَاحِ وَجَعَلَ اللَّيْلَ سَكَنًا وَالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ حُسْبَانًا ۚ ذَٰلِكَ تَقْدِيرُ الْعَزِيزِ الْعَلِيمِ ﴿٩٧﴾

[98] And it is He who hath set for you the stars that ye may be guided thereby in the darkness of the land and the sea! Thus have We made clear to those who understand the signs (of our Providence and Mercy).

وَهُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ النُّجُومَ لِتَهْتَدُوا بِهَا فِي ظُلُمَاتِ الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ ۗ قَدْ فَصَّلْنَا الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٩٨﴾

[99] And it is He who hath caused you to spring from one single being, and then provided for you an abode, and then a place for lying at rest. Thus have We made our signs clear for those who are thoughtful.

وَهُوَ الَّذِيْٓ اَنْشَاَكُمْ مِّنْ نَّفْسٍ
وَّاحِدَةٍ فَمُسْتَقَرٌّ وَّمُسْتَوْدَعٌ ۗ
قَدْ فَصَّلْنَا الْاٰيٰتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَّفْقَهُوْنَ ﴿٩٨﴾

[100] And it is He who sendeth down rain from the sky; and by its means We bring forth buds of all plants and from them bring We forth again green foliage and then close-packed ears of corn and palm trees, with sheaths putting forth hanging branches of dates, and gardens of grapes and olives and pomegranates, like and unlike. Look ye at the fruit thereof as it (gradually) grows and ripens! Truly herein are signs to ponder on for a people who have faith (in Divine Providence).

وَهُوَ الَّذِيْٓ اَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَآءِ مَآءً ۚ
فَاَخْرَجْنَا بِهٖ نَبَاتَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ فَاَخْرَجْنَا
مِنْهُ خَضِرًا نُّخْرِجُ مِنْهُ حَبًّا مُّتَرَاكِبًا ۚ
وَمِنَ النَّخْلِ مِنْ طَلْعِهَا قِنْوَانٌ دَانِيَةٌ
وَّجَنّٰتٍ مِّنْ اَعْنَابٍ وَّالزَّيْتُوْنَ وَ
الرُّمَّانَ مُشْتَبِهًا وَّغَيْرَ مُتَشَابِهٍ ۗ
اُنْظُرُوْٓا اِلٰى ثَمَرِهٖٓ اِذَآ اَثْمَرَ وَيَنْعِهٖ ۗ
اِنَّ فِيْ ذٰلِكُمْ لَاٰيٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ
يُّؤْمِنُوْنَ

In the preceding verses, the *Qur'ān* has, on the one hand, answered the criticism of those who belittled Revelation, and on the other, illustrated the machinery of life and its working, or the way of Providence, to serve as a proof of the Divinity at work in the Universe. Such is the method which the *Qur'ān* adopts to present its themes. By 'the way of Providence,' we mean the way or manner of growth and sustenance of life in the Universe. Everything about this Universe seems to be so devised that it looks as if all is planned by a mighty, wise and kind Providence. The *Qur'ān* asks: If all this framework of life is not sustained by a single Supreme Providence, what is it then that holds it together and makes provision for the life of everything therein?

The *Qur'ān* advances this fact of life in the Universe as a positive proof of the Unity of God and asks: Which of those whom you have set up for God is there who has a voice in the working of this great machinery of life?

Verse 100 refutes the polytheistic beliefs of the pagan Arabs. These people entertained superstitious beliefs about the jinn or genii. They believed that they could harm man in a mysterious way and likewise endowed them with strange powers. They also believed that the angels were the sons and daughters of God and were privileged to exercise Divine powers.

[101] And they set up the jinn as peers for God, although (they admit that) it is God who hath created these, and in ignorance ascribe to Him falsely sons and daughters. Transcendent is He, and far above that which they attribute to Him!

وَجَعَلُوا لِلَّهِ شُرَكَاءَ الْجِنَّ وَخَلَقَهُمْ وَخَرَقُوا لَهُ بَنِينَ وَبَنَاتٍ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ ١٠٠

ع ١٢ ١٨

SECTION 13

[102] Originator of the heavens and of the earth! How can there be an offspring for Him when there never was for Him a mate? And everything hath He created and of everything hath He knowledged.

[103] Such is God, your Lord! There is no god but He, the Creator of all things. Therefore Him alone do ye serve. (Remember) that He is the guardian of all things.

[104] No vision can take Him in and He takes in all vision and He is the Subtile, the All-informed

بَدِيعُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَنَّىٰ يَكُونُ لَهُ وَلَدٌ وَلَمْ تَكُن لَّهُ صَاحِبَةٌ وَخَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ١٠١ ذَٰلِكُمُ اللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ لَا إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ خَالِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ فَاعْبُدُوهُ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَكِيلٌ ١٠٢

لَا تُدْرِكُهُ الْأَبْصَارُ وَهُوَ يُدْرِكُ الْأَبْصَارَ وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ ١٠٣

[105] (Say;) "Now are things clearly disclosed to you to reflect on. Should any one take note of them, that will be to his own advantage; (on the other hand) should one choose to remain blind to them, that will be to his own disadvantage. (Remember) I am not a keeper over you (to force you to reflect over)."

قَدْ جَآءَكُمْ بَصَآئِرُ مِنْ رَّبِّكُمْ فَمَنْ أَبْصَرَ فَلِنَفْسِهِ وَمَنْ عَمِيَ فَعَلَيْهَا وَمَآ أَنَا عَلَيْكُمْ بِحَفِيظٍ ﴿١٠٥﴾

[106] So clear have We made our revelations (in diverse ways) that they exclaim: "Thou indeed hath been well instructed (and have not minced anything in the expression of truth)", and We do this in order that you may make clear their significance to a people who may be disposed to understand.

وَكَذٰلِكَ نُصَرِّفُ الْاٰيٰتِ وَلِيَقُولُوا دَرَسْتَ وَلِنُبَيِّنَهُ لِقَوْمٍ يَّعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٠٦﴾

[107] Follow thou that which hath been revealed to thee from thy Lord (other than whom) there is no god but He: and hold aloof from the polytheists.

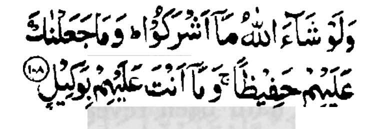
اِتَّبِعْ مَآ أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَّبِّكَ لَآ إِلٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿١٠٧﴾

Attention is drawn here to the fact that differences do manifest themselves in human thought and action, and that in the nature of things you cannot have a dead pattern of humanity observing but one way of intellectual behaviour or action in life. So whatever you may think right, do propagate it; but do not expect that every one in the world will

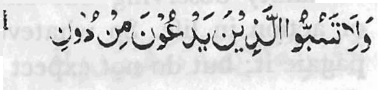
agree with you. Those who appreciate your thought will certainly accept it and those who fail to understand you, they certainly will not agree with you. You are not appointed a keeper over men that you might control their thought and action. None of you is ever expected to be responsible for goodness in others.

Had God so willed He would have made mankind of but one pattern, with one way of behaviour, even as the lower animals. But you notice that He hath not so wished. He has so devised the nature of man that every group of men has developed its own set of likes and dislikes and ways peculiar to it. So, one will have to bear with each other and exercise toleration.

The *Qur'ān*, therefore, asks the Prophet certainly to invite the polytheists to the way of truth, but in so doing, it asks him not to say anything hurtful to their feelings or susceptibilities. If you should abuse their idols, they are likely to abuse your God in return. The result will be that you will involve yourself in mutual recrimination and allow the truth to be side-tracked.



[108] Had God pleased they would not have taken others for God; (not that God hath not the power to do so; but that is not His way. He leaves every one to be responsible for his thought and action. The task of the Prophet was but to point out the truth and exercise no compulsion.) And We have not appointed thee a keeper over them nor art thou (of thy own choice) a guardian over them.



[109] (O ye who have accepted the faith of the Prophet!) Revile not those whom they

call upon beside God lest they in their ignorance revile God by way of a rejoinder. Thus have We made the actions of every people seem fair to them. After all, they are to return to their Lord when He will declare to them the nature of the deeds they have done (in their present life).

اللَّهِ فَيَسُبُّوا اللَّهَ عَدْوًا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ كَذَٰلِكَ زَيَّنَّا لِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ عَمَلَهُمْ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِم مَّرْجِعُهُمْ فَيُنَبِّئُهُم بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٠٩﴾

[110] They (the disbelievers) swear by God as solemnly as they can that if a sign comes unto them, they will certainly believe in the import thereof. (O Prophet!) Tell them "Signs are in the power of God alone (to offer)". And (O believers!) what will make you understand that even when a sign does come forth, they will not accept it?

وَأَقْسَمُوا بِاللَّهِ جَهْدَ أَيْمَانِهِمْ لَئِن جَاءَتْهُمْ آيَةٌ لَّيُؤْمِنُنَّ بِهَا قُلْ إِنَّمَا الْآيَاتُ عِندَ اللَّهِ وَمَا يُشْعِرُكُمْ أَنَّهَا إِذَا جَاءَتْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١١٠﴾

[111] We shall turn away their hearts and eyes (from it), even as they had themselves turned away from it (when it first came forth) and We will leave them to their iniquities to indulge therein recklessly.

وَنُقَلِّبُ أَفْئِدَتَهُمْ وَأَبْصَارَهُمْ كَمَا لَمْ يُؤْمِنُوا بِهِ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَنَذَرُهُمْ فِي طُغْيَانِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ ﴿١١١﴾ ع

Section 14

[112] (Be sure that) Even if We were to send down the

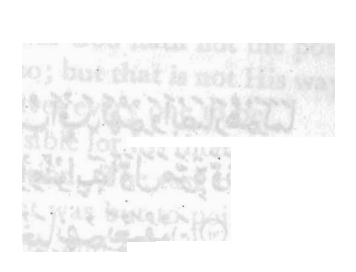
الجزء الثامن

وَلَوْ أَنَّنَا نَزَّلْنَا إِلَيْهِمُ الْمَلَائِكَةَ

angels to them and even if the dead were to speak to them and We bring together all things face to face with them, they are not a people who will believe, unless God so will it; but most of them are indifferent.

وَكَلَّمَهُمُ الْمَوْتَىٰ وَحَشَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ قُبُلًا مَّا كَانُوا لِيُؤْمِنُوا إِلَّا أَن يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ يَجْهَلُونَ ﴿١١١﴾







PART VIII

Chapter VI

THE CATTLE (*Contd.*)



CHAPTER VI

THE CATTLE (*Contd.*)

SECTION 14

[113] Thus did We set up for every prophet (at the time of his advent) enemies from among men and jinn, the evil minded, to confer with each other on the framing of gilded lies so as to delude (the people from the right track). If thy Lord had so willed, they would not have done it. (His way is to let both darkness and light be at work in life, and likewise truth and falsehood. So do not grieve over any opposition to you from those who do not agree with you.) Leave them then to their own devices.

وَكَذٰلِكَ جَعَلْنَا لِكُلِّ نَبِيٍّ عَدُوًّا شَيٰطِيْنَ الْاِنْسِ وَالْجِنِّ يُوْحِيْ بَعْضُهُمْ اِلٰى بَعْضٍ زُخْرُفَ الْقَوْلِ غُرُوْرًا وَلَوْ شَاۗءَ رَبُّكَ مَا فَعَلُوْهُ فَذَرْهُمْ وَمَا يَفْتَرُوْنَ ﴿١١٣﴾

[114] And let the hearts of those who believe not in the life to come, incline towards them (those who oppose the prophets) and appreciate (what they say), so that they too might earn the evil earnings which the others were earning.

وَلِتَصْغٰٓى اِلَيْهِ اَفْـِٕدَةُ الَّذِيْنَ لَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِالْاٰخِرَةِ وَلِيَرْضَوْهُ وَلِيَقْتَرِفُوْا مَا هُمْ مُّقْتَرِفُوْنَ ﴿١١٤﴾

[115] (O Prophet! Ask them) "Shall I then seek a judge other than God (to settle between

اَفَغَيْرَ اللّٰهِ اَبْتَغِيْ حَكَمًا وَّهُوَ الَّذِيْٓ

us) when it is He who hath sent down for you a book with everything clearly set forth. They to whom We have clearly given the Book (the Jews and the Christians) know full well that it (the *Qur'ān*) is sent down from thy Lord in right form. Do not then be of those who doubt."

أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكُمُ الْكِتٰبَ مُفَصَّلًا ؕ وَالَّذِينَ اٰتَيْنٰهُمُ الْكِتٰبَ يَعْلَمُونَ اَنَّهٗ مُنَزَّلٌ مِّنْ رَّبِّكَ بِالْحَقِّ فَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمُمْتَرِيْنَ ﴿١١٥﴾

[116] (And remember that) the word of thy Lord is complete in itself, rightly set and perfectly balanced. None can replace His words and He heareth, knoweth all.

وَتَمَّتْ كَلِمَتُ رَبِّكَ صِدْقًا وَّعَدْلًا ؕ لَا مُبَدِّلَ لِكَلِمٰتِهٖ ۚ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿١١٦﴾

The *Qur'ān* now points out that the issues between truth and falsehood cannot be settled by the strength of numbers alone but by the test of reality. Very often the majority of mankind seems lost to truth and reason. Such was the condition of the human mind when the *Qur'ān* appeared. So the *Qur'ān* asks the thoughtful among men not to be led away by the vast numerical strength of the perverse but to test things on their merits, and see which way is the way of light and reason, and which of doubts and ignorance.

The *Qur'ān* then counters the superstitious notions of the polytheist Arabs of the days of the Prophet in the matter of food. These remonstrated why and how animals dedicated to their idols, which on that account they sanctified, were not lawful for food.

[117] Wert thou to follow most men in this world (who have gone astray), they would lead thee away from the path of God;

وَإِنْ تُطِعْ

عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللّٰهِ ؕ اِنْ يَّتَّبِعُونَ اِلَّا

they but follow their fancies and indulge in guesses.

ٱلظَّنَّ وَإِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَخْرُصُونَ ١١٧

[118] Thy Lord! He (without doubt) best knoweth those who have strayed from His path and knoweth those who are rightly guided.

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ مَن يَضِلُّ عَن سَبِيلِهِۦ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِٱلْمُهْتَدِينَ ١١٨

[119] So (do not follow mere fancies, but) eat of that over which the name of God hath been pronounced if ye have faith in His directions.

فَكُلُوا۟ مِمَّا ذُكِرَ ٱسْمُ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ إِن كُنتُم بِـَٔايَٰتِهِۦ مُؤْمِنِينَ ١١٩

[120] What preventeth you from partaking of that over which the name of God hath been pronounced when He hath made it clear to you what exactly He hath forbidden you, except what ye might be drawn to by sheer necessity (or in order to save life); but many indeed mislead (others) by their own desires through lack of knowledge. Verily thy Lord! He best knoweth those who wilfully transgress.

وَمَا لَكُمْ أَلَّا تَأْكُلُوا۟ مِمَّا ذُكِرَ ٱسْمُ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ وَقَدْ فَصَّلَ لَكُم مَّا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِلَّا مَا ٱضْطُرِرْتُمْ إِلَيْهِ ۗ وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا لَّيُضِلُّونَ بِأَهْوَآئِهِم بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ ۗ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِٱلْمُعْتَدِينَ ١٢٠

[121] Do not indulge in sin (at their prompting) either openly or in secret. Those who commit sin (however secretly) will one day reap the result of the sin they commit

وَذَرُوا۟ ظَٰهِرَ ٱلْإِثْمِ وَبَاطِنَهُۥٓ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَكْسِبُونَ ٱلْإِثْمَ سَيُجْزَوْنَ بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَقْتَرِفُونَ ١٢١

Some of the stronger opponents of the Prophet from among the people of Mecca engaged others in wilful disquisitions regarding the provisions of the *Qur'ān* and roused misgivings

in the minds of Muslims. For instance, they used to point to the animal as slaughtered by the Muslims and ask them how an animal so slaughtered by them was lawful for food and why an animal which had died a natural death was not lawful for food. The *Qur'ān* admonishes its believers not to be influenced by such trifling argument. It does not lead to truth. There is always a good purpose underlying every legal prohibition; and since not every one can realise this purpose easily, the right course is simply to obey the law and not to indulge in disquisitions over it.

Verse 122 distinguishes between faith and its denial. Faith is life indeed; it is the light thrown out by knowledge and reason; disbelief or denial of truth on the other hand is intellectual death; it is darkness brought about by doubt and superstition. Therefore can one who has a light before him be on a par with another who is enveloped in darkness?

So, is it possible for one whose life is based on right belief t fall into disbelief and live in superstition born of polytheisti fancies?

Verse 123 points to the usual phenomenon in life tha whenever some one comes forth to announce a truth, thos pursuing vested interests in the community begin to realise that unless the announcer of the truth is suppressed, they shall not have the freedom to have their own way. They, very often, are tempted to intrigue against him in diverse ways, only to see that his mission is not met with success.

Speaking of the opposition offered to the Prophet by the leaders of Mecca, the *Qur'ān* refers to one of the ways by which they pursued their vendetta against the Prophet. They called upon him to show miracles. Repeatedly did the *Qur'ān* discountenance this demand.

Verse 125 observes that when an error takes deep root in the mind of any one, the very bent of his mind gets so crooked that nothing straight or straight-forward is rightly apprehended by it.

[122] Partake not of that over which the name of God hath

وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا مِمَّا لَمْ يُذْكَرِ اسْمُ اللّٰهِ

not been pronounced, for that is a sin. Verily, the evil-minded are ever instigating their friends to wrangle with you. If you obey them, you will indeed be of the unbelievers.

عليه وانه لفسق وان الشيطين
ليوحون الى اوليهم ليجادلوكم
وان اطعتموهم انكم لمشركون ١٢٢

Section 15

[123] Is (the state of) one who was dead and whom We have brought back to life and given him a light to walk by among men, the same as that of one who is steeped in darkness and yet will not care to come out of it? (Never!) So it is that (even as one inured to darkness feel at home with darkness), the deeds of the unbelievers are made to seem fair to them.

اومن كان ميتا فاحيينه وجعلنا
له نورا يمشي به في الناس كمن
مثله في الظلمت ليس بخارج
منها كذلك زين للكفرين ما
كانوا يعملون ١٢٣

[124] Thus have We in every town leaders among the evil doers to scheme (against the Prophet); but only against themselves do they scheme, (since it is the law of life) that if one pursues an evil, that evil inevitably recoils on him), although they are not conscious of it.

وكذلك جعلنا في كل قرية اكبر
مجرميها ليمكروا فيها وما يمكرون
الا بانفسهم وما يشعرون ١٢٤

[125] When a sign (of truth) cometh to them, they say: "We will not believe till the like of what was given (in the past) to the messengers of God is given to us." God knoweth best where to send His signs. Soon shall

واذا جاءتهم اية قالوا لن نؤمن
حتى نؤتى مثل ما اوتي رسل
الله الله اعلم حيث
رسلته سيصيب الذين اجرموا

God impose on the sinners humiliation and a severe chastisement for their schemings.

صغار عند الله وعذاب شديد بما كانوا يمكرون ﴿١٢٥﴾

[126] And whomsoever God willeth to guide, his breast will He open to Islam (or to the truth it stands for); but whomsoever He willeth to let go astray, His breast will He make strait and contracted, as if he were climbing up the sky (gasping). Thus doth God impose chastisement on those who believe not.

فمن يرد الله أن يهديه يشرح صدره للإسلام ومن يرد أن يضله يجعل صدره ضيقا حرجا كأنما يصعد في السماء كذلك يجعل الله الرجس على الذين لا يؤمنون ﴿١٢٦﴾

[127] And this (path of Islam) is the path of thy Lord—a straight one. Surely, have We set forth clearly Our revelations for a people who may heed.

وهذا صراط ربك مستقيما قد فصلنا الآيات لقوم يذكرون ﴿١٢٧﴾

[128] For them shall there be an abode of peace with their Lord and in recompense for their deeds shall He be their protector.

لهم دار السلام عند ربهم وهو وليهم بما كانوا يعملون ﴿١٢٨﴾

[129] And on the day when He shall gather them all together (will He say): "O order of Jinn! (or Satans) ye have exploited mankind (through your guile) a good deal" and those among men who were their votaries will say (under the compulsive pressure of truth): "O our Lord! we have received help (in sin) one from another and have reached our term—the term which Thou has set

ويوم يحشرهم جميعا يا معشر الجن قد استكثرتم من الإنس وقال أولياؤهم من الإنس ربنا استمتع بعضنا ببعض وبلغنا أجلنا الذي أجلت لنا قال النار مثواكم

خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهَآ اِلَّا مَا شَآءَ اللّٰهُ ؕ اِنَّ رَبَّكَ حَكِيْمٌ عَلِيْمٌ ﴿۱۲۹﴾

for us, (and our fate is now to be settled by Thee)." He will say: "Fire then is your abode, to dwell in unless God wills otherwise". Verily (O Prophet!) thy Lord is Wise, the Knowing.

وَكَذٰلِكَ نُوَلِّيْ بَعْضَ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ بَعْضًا ۢ بِمَا كَانُوْا يَكْسِبُوْنَ ﴿۱۳۰﴾

[130] Even thus place We some of the unjust over the other unjust as the meed of what they were striving for.

There have been no people among whom a prophet was not raised to guide them to the path of truth. It is not the way of God to deny to any people or country the privilege of receiving revelation and yet hold them responsible for any shortcomings in their conduct in life. Individuals and groups of individuals are ranked according to the measure of goodness they display in life. Hence it is that we style some as righteous and others not; every action has its effect and it is by the effect that we judge the nature of the action.

SECTION 16

يٰمَعْشَرَ الْجِنِّ وَالْاِنْسِ اَلَمْ يَاْتِكُمْ رُسُلٌ مِّنْكُمْ يَقُصُّوْنَ عَلَيْكُمْ اٰيٰتِيْ وَيُنْذِرُوْنَكُمْ لِقَآءَ يَوْمِكُمْ هٰذَا ؕ قَالُوْا شَهِدْنَا عَلٰٓى اَنْفُسِنَا وَغَرَّتْهُمُ

[131] (On that day We will also ask them): "O Orders of jinn and men! (You avow your weaknesses today as if you never knew they were weaknesses.) Did not apostles arise for you from among yourselves announcing to you My directions and warning you of the day you have to face?" They will say: "We bear witness against ourselves. (Prophets did come to us to warn us against evil). (The fact is that) this world's life had deluded them.

so much so, that they shall now bear witness against themselves that they truly were not believers.

الْحَيٰوةُ الدُّنْيَا وَشَهِدُوْا عَلٰٓى اَنْفُسِهِمْ اَنَّهُمْ كَانُوْا كٰفِرِيْنَ ﴿۱۳۰﴾

[132] O Prophet! This (the fact of Prophets having warned every people against evil) is (brought to mind), because it is not the way of thy Lord to destroy cities arbitrarily ere their peoples were duly warned.

ذٰلِكَ اَنْ لَّمْ يَكُنْ رَّبُّكَ مُهْلِكَ الْقُرٰى بِظُلْمٍ وَّاَهْلُهَا غٰفِلُوْنَ ﴿۱۳۱﴾

[133] (This is the law of life that) every one is assigned a place according to what he has wrought, and (remember that) thy Lord is not inattentive to what they do.

وَلِكُلٍّ دَرَجٰتٌ مِّمَّا عَمِلُوْا ۭ وَمَا رَبُّكَ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا يَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿۱۳۲﴾

Another law of life is enunciated. Life is so devised that if a particular people are found persistently disregardful of the laws of life or the demands of truth, they are in due course replaced by another people who may be inclined to follow those laws of life with due propriety. That is why we witness the rise and fall of nations in the course of history.

Verse 135 makes it clear that God never gives ultimate success to those who oppress others. That, the *Qur'ān* points out, is the eternal law of life. "Who of us," the Prophet is asked to say, "we who follow the Truth or you who oppose it, are in the right, will certainly be demonstrated by the success which will attend either of us in the end." And so did it happen. The Prophet succeeded against his opponents. His success was a manifestation of the Divine decree implicit in the functioning of the law of life just referred to.

[134] Thy Lord is sufficient unto Himself, full of compassion! He can put you away if He please, and cause whom He

وَرَبُّكَ الْغَنِيُّ ذُو الرَّحْمَةِ ۭ اِنْ يَّشَاْ يُذْهِبْكُمْ وَيَسْتَخْلِفْ مِنْۢ بَعْدِكُمْ مَّا

will to take your place, even
as He raised you up in place
of the offspring of other peoples.
(Such is the Divine law which works in life.)

يَشَآءُ كَمَآ أَنشَأَكُم مِّن ذُرِّيَّةِ قَوْمٍ ءَاخَرِينَ ﴿١٣٤﴾

[135] Verily, all that of which you
were fore-warned will come to pass;
and you cannot thwart Him.

إِنَّ مَا تُوعَدُونَ لَءَاتٍ ۖ وَمَآ أَنتُم
بِمُعْجِزِينَ ﴿١٣٥﴾

[136] (O Prophet say to them): "O
my people! act as you like (in
ways open to you). I shall go on
acting in my own way. (The law
of life fixed by God will have
its course, so much so that) soon
shall ye know to whom in the end
success shall belong. Verily the
wrong-doers will not prosper.

قُلْ يَٰقَوْمِ ٱعْمَلُوا۟ عَلَىٰ مَكَانَتِكُمْ إِنِّى
عَامِلٌ ۖ فَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ مَن تَكُونُ
لَهُۥ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلدَّارِ ۗ إِنَّهُۥ لَا يُفْلِحُ ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ ﴿١٣٦﴾

The *Qur'ān* then turns to refer to the superstitions and the evil customs prevailing among the polytheistic Arabs of the Prophet's time:

(1) The Arab polytheists used to vow that in case any of their wishes was fulfilled, they would give away from their tilth and cattle a certain portion to God and another portion to their idols. The portion assigned to God was distributed among the poor and that assigned to idols among their priests. They did not mind if anything assigned to God was not delivered in full to the poor, but they were very particular about what was due to the priests from what was offered to their idols.

(2) They took great pride in killing their daughters since they were enjoined to do so by their elders and their priests.

(3) A portion of their tilth and cattle was reserved exclusively for the benefit of the priests; anything out of this was strictly prohibited for others.

(4) Certain cattle were dedicated to the idols and no work

was taken out of them since they thought that such action would be sacrilegious.

(5) They did not pronounce the name of God when sacrificing an animal before their idols.

(6) If the offspring of any sacrificed pregnant animal came out alive, it was reserved for food for males, but if it came out dead, the women-folk were allowed a share.

The *Qur'ān* regards all this as an expression of ignorance and barbarity. Its general rule is that everything that is clean, whether in the form of vegetable or animal food, is permissible to man. The only caution given is to refrain from excess or extravagance. The injunction is laid down that a portion of what you assign to yourselves should be used or spent in the way of God or for the benefit of the poor. This is the way of common sense and the only straight way. The rest is superstition.

وَجَعَلُوا لِلّٰهِ مِمَّا ذَرَاَ مِنَ الْحَرْثِ وَ الْاَنْعَامِ نَصِيْبًا فَقَالُوْا هٰذَا لِلّٰهِ بِزَعْمِهِمْ وَهٰذَا لِشُرَكَآئِنَا ۚ فَمَا كَانَ لِشُرَكَآئِهِمْ فَلَا يَصِلُ اِلَى اللّٰهِ ۚ وَمَا كَانَ لِلّٰهِ فَهُوَ يَصِلُ اِلٰى شُرَكَآئِهِمْ ۗ سَآءَ مَا يَحْكُمُوْنَ ﴿۱۳۶﴾

[137] Moreover, they assign to God, from the tilth and cattle that He has produced, a portion and say: "This is for God"—so deem they—"and this for the partners (we give to God)". But that which is assigned to their associate-gods will not go to God (or be spent for the poor) while that which is assigned to God goes to their associate-gods. How bad is their settlement!

وَكَذٰلِكَ زَيَّنَ لِكَثِيْرٍ مِّنَ الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ قَتْلَ اَوْلَادِهِمْ شُرَكَآؤُهُمْ لِيُرْدُوْهُمْ

[138] Thus on account of these associate-gods, the sacrificing of their children (at their altars—a barbarious act—) is fair-seeming to most of the poly-theists, a practice which ruins

them and gives to them the glow of religion. But if God had so willed, they would not have done so. (He lets the law of life take its course). So leave them to their devices. (They will not listen to your advice.)

وليلبسوا عليهم دينهم ولو شاء
الله ما فعلوه فذرهم وما يفترون ﴿١٣٨﴾

[139] They also say: "(Such and such) cattle and produce of fields none shall partake of except those whom we may wish to do so". So deem they—"and such and such are the cattle whose backs are not to be burdened and such and such are the cattle over which the name of God is not to be pronounced";—a mere fabrication against Him. Soon will He mete out to them the desert of their coinings.

وقالوا هذه أنعام وحرث حجر لا
يطعمها إلا من نشاء بزعمهم و
أنعام حرمت ظهورها وأنعام لا
يذكرون اسم الله عليها افتراء
عليه سيجزيهم بما كانوا يفترون ﴿١٣٩﴾

[140] They say: "What is in the wombs of these cattle is reserved for our males and forbidden to our females. But if it is born dead, then all may partake of it. Soon will He mete out to them the deserts of their vain distinctions. Verily, Wise is He, the Knowing.

وقالوا ما في بطون هذه الأنعام
خالصة لذكورنا ومحرم على
أزواجنا وإن يكن ميتة فهم
فيه شركاء سيجزيهم وصفهم
إنه حكيم عليم ﴿١٤٠﴾

[141] Surely they are losers who in their ignorance have killed their children stupidly and have declared unlawful what God hath given them for food, inventing a lie against

قد خسر الذين قتلوا أولادهم سفها
بغير علم وحرموا ما رزقهم الله افتراء

God; indeed they have strayed and are not on the right path.

عَلَى اللّٰهِ قَدْ ضَلُّوْا وَمَا كَانُوْا مُهْتَدِيْنَ ﴿١٤٠﴾

SECTION 17

[142] He it is who hath produced (vine) gardens, trellised and un-trellised, and the palm trees, and corn of different kinds, and olives and pomegranates, like and unlike. Eat of their fruit when they bear fruit, and pay the due thereof on the day of its ingathering, and waste not, for God liketh not the wasteful.

وَهُوَ الَّذِيْۤ اَنْشَاَ جَنّٰتٍ مَّعْرُوْشٰتٍ
وَّغَيْرَ مَعْرُوْشٰتٍ وَّالنَّخْلَ وَالزَّرْعَ
مُخْتَلِفًا اُكُلُهٗ وَالزَّيْتُوْنَ وَالرُّمَّانَ
مُتَشَابِهًا وَّغَيْرَ مُتَشَابِهٍ كُلُوْا مِنْ ثَمَرِهٖۤ
اِذَآ اَثْمَرَ وَاٰتُوْا حَقَّهٗ يَوْمَ حَصَادِهٖ
وَلَا تُسْرِفُوْا اِنَّهٗ لَا يُحِبُّ
الْمُسْرِفِيْنَ ﴿١٤١﴾

[143] Of cattle some are meant for carrying burden (like camels and horses) and some not, being of slender size (like sheep). Eat of what God hath provided you (for food) and follow not the foot-steps of Satan as he is your declared enemy.

وَمِنَ الْاَنْعَامِ حَمُوْلَةً وَّفَرْشًا كُلُوْا
مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ اللّٰهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوْا خُطُوٰتِ
الشَّيْطٰنِ اِنَّهٗ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِيْنٌ ﴿١٤٢﴾

[144] (For food you usually have) eight animals, two pairs of sheep and two pairs of goats. Ask (them) "Hath he forbidden the two males or the two females—(of the two pairs of each kind)? Or (hath He forbidden) that which the wombs contain of the two females (of each variety of pairs)? Tell me, what is your authority, if ye speak the truth?"

ثَمٰنِيَةَ اَزْوَاجٍ مِنَ الضَّاْنِ اثْنَيْنِ
وَمِنَ الْمَعْزِ اثْنَيْنِ قُلْ ءٰۗالذَّكَرَيْنِ
حَرَّمَ اَمِ الْاُنْثَيَيْنِ اَمَّا اشْتَمَلَتْ
عَلَيْهِ اَرْحَامُ الْاُنْثَيَيْنِ نَبِّـُٔوْ
اِنْ كُنْتُمْ صٰدِقِيْنَ ﴿١٤٣﴾

[145] (Or take the case of) a pair of camels and a pair of oxen. Ask (them) what hath He forbidden—

وَمِنَ الْاِبِلِ اثْنَيْنِ وَمِنَ الْبَقَرِ اثْنَيْنِ
قُلْ ءٰۗالذَّكَرَيْنِ حَرَّمَ اَمِ الْاُنْثَيَيْنِ

he two males or the two females, or that which the wombs of the two females contain? Or were ye present when God gave you this commandment? Who then does greater wrong than he, who in his ignorance inventeth a lie against God to mislead men? Remember, God never guideth those who do wrong.

أَمَّا اشْتَمَلَتْ عَلَيْهِ أَرْحَامُ الْأُنْثَيَيْنِ
أَمْ كُنْتُمْ شُهَدَاءَ إِذْ وَصَّاكُمُ اللَّهُ
بِهَٰذَا ۚ فَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ افْتَرَىٰ عَلَى
اللَّهِ كَذِبًا لِيُضِلَّ النَّاسَ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ ۗ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿١٤٥﴾

The *Qur'ān* regards the meat of all animals as lawful for food except of those specifically mentioned therein. The Jews had at one time been ordered not to partake of the meat of certain animals having nails and also the fat of cows and sheep. This was, however, a temporary measure intended to put a check on their inordination, although the meat of such animals or the fat of cows and sheep was always lawful food. (Vide Q. 4 : 160)

SECTION 18

[146] Say: "I do not find in what hath been revealed to me anything forbidden to any one to eat except it be that which dieth of itself or the blood which is shed or the flesh of swine—for it is abomination—or that which is profane because of the name of some one besides God having been pronounced over it. But whosoever is driven to it, neither wilfully nor in transgression, (he will surely find) God indulgent, merciful.

قُلْ لَا أَجِدُ فِي مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيَّ مُحَرَّمًا
عَلَىٰ طَاعِمٍ يَطْعَمُهُ إِلَّا أَنْ يَكُونَ
مَيْتَةً أَوْ دَمًا مَسْفُوحًا أَوْ لَحْمَ خِنْزِيرٍ
فَإِنَّهُ رِجْسٌ أَوْ فِسْقًا أُهِلَّ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ
بِهِ ۚ فَمَنِ اضْطُرَّ غَيْرَ بَاغٍ وَلَا عَادٍ
فَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿١٤٦﴾

[147] To the Jews did We forbid

وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ هَادُوا حَرَّمْنَا كُلَّ ذِي

every animal with nails, and the fat of the ox and the sheep except the fat which is on their backs or their entrails or that which sticketh to the bones. That was the desert that We meted out to them for their inordinacy, (although these things in themselves were not unlawful for food). Verily, We state the truth.

ظُفُرٍ ۚ وَمِنَ الْبَقَرِ وَالْغَنَمِ حَرَّمْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ شُحُومَهُمَا إِلَّا مَا حَمَلَتْ ظُهُورُهُمَا أَوِ الْحَوَايَا أَوْ مَا اخْتَلَطَ بِعَظْمٍ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ جَزَيْنَاهُم بِبَغْيِهِمْ ۖ وَإِنَّا لَصَادِقُونَ ﴿١٤٧﴾

[148] If after this, they treat thee as a liar, say: "Your Lord is of unbounded mercy (He allows respite after respite to see if they would make amends) but His strict attention will not be weaned away from the guilty."

فَإِن كَذَّبُوكَ فَقُل رَّبُّكُمْ ذُو رَحْمَةٍ وَاسِعَةٍ وَلَا يُرَدُّ بَأْسُهُ عَنِ الْقَوْمِ الْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴿١٤٨﴾

The polytheists of Arabia contended that if the way followed by their ancestors was the way of error, why was it that God allowed us to go the wrong way? If everything happens in accordance with His decree alone, it follows that the things that we have done, have been done in accordance therewith.

The *Qur'ān* regards this attitude of theirs as perverse, and states that they have no justification in support of their contention.

Hath God so wished, He would have made all mankind of but one pattern. This undoubtedly was not beyond His power; but it should be remembered that God hath fixed a law of life, the law of causation. Every action is followed by an appropriate effect. Two ways are always open before man—one of darkness, the other of light. One has to choose between the two and reap the consequence. That is the law of life fixed for man. In the language of the *Qur'ān*, that is His wish, His decree. Verse 150 makes it clear that it is improper to attribute their folly to the will of God.

[149] Those who set up peers for God will now say: "If God had so willed, we should not have set up peers (for Him), neither we nor our fathers; nor should we have of our own accord regarded anything unlawful". Even so had those who lived before them charged (our apostles) with imposture until they tasted our strict noticing. (O Prophet), Say: "Have you any authority which you can produce before us? Ye but follow fancies and indulge in sheer guesses."

سَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا لَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا أَشْرَكْنَا وَلَا آبَاؤُنَا وَلَا حَرَّمْنَا مِن شَيْءٍ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ كَذَّبَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ ذَاقُوا بَأْسَنَا ۗ قُلْ هَلْ عِندَكُم مِّنْ عِلْمٍ فَتُخْرِجُوهُ لَنَا ۖ إِن تَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنَّ وَإِنْ أَنتُمْ إِلَّا تَخْرُصُونَ ﴿١٤٩﴾

[150] Say: "The contention of God is the most convincing contention. (This is clear to men of understanding.) Had God willed (or had you conformed to the will or law of God), He would have guided you all in a body."

قُلْ فَلِلَّهِ الْحُجَّةُ الْبَالِغَةُ ۖ فَلَوْ شَاءَ لَهَدَاكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿١٥٠﴾

[151] Say: "Bring hither your witnesses who can testify (to your presumption) that God hath forbidden such and such (animals). Even if they testify, do not thou testify with them, (since their stand is by no means correct), nor accede to the low desires of those who have counted false our revelations and who do not believe in the Hereafter and set up peers for their Lord.

قُلْ هَلُمَّ شُهَدَاءَكُمُ الَّذِينَ يَشْهَدُونَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ حَرَّمَ هَٰذَا ۖ فَإِن شَهِدُوا فَلَا تَشْهَدْ مَعَهُمْ ۚ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا وَالَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ وَهُم بِرَبِّهِمْ يَعْدِلُونَ ﴿١٥١﴾

You regard through your own superstition certain articles of food as unlawful, while in reality they are not. Those things alone are unlawful which are in reality repugnant to right living and which have uniformly been declared unlawful by all prophets.

The *Qur'ān* then refers to such evils as are intrinsically baneful to human welfare and invites man to ways of living which indeed promote and sustain his welfare.

Section 19

[152] Say: "Come, I will rehearse what your Lord hath made is binding on you—that ye associate naught with Him and that ye be good to your parents; and that ye slay not your children because of poverty;—for them and for you will We afford provision—that ye draw not near indecencies either in thought or in deed, and that ye take not anyone's life sanctified by God except for a just cause (such as murder). This hath He enjoined on you that haply you may steady your mind.

قُلْ تَعَالَوْا أَتْلُ مَا حَرَّمَ رَبُّكُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ أَلَّا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا ۚ وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ مِّنْ إِمْلَاقٍ ۖ نَّحْنُ نَرْزُقُكُمْ وَإِيَّاهُمْ ۚ وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا الْفَوَاحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَنَ ۚ وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ ۗ ذَٰلِكُمْ وَصَّاكُمْ بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٥٢﴾

[153] And do not touch the property of the orphan except to replace it with something better until he come of age; and use your measures and balance with due sense of justice; We do not lay a burden upon anyone beyond his capacity to bear. And when ye speak a thing, observe justice

وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا مَالَ الْيَتِيمِ إِلَّا بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ حَتَّىٰ يَبْلُغَ أَشُدَّهُ ۚ وَأَوْفُوا الْكَيْلَ وَالْمِيزَانَ بِالْقِسْطِ ۚ لَا نُكَلِّفُ

even though it affects a kinsman, and fulfil the promises that ye may have made with God. This doth He enjoin on you that haply ye may be [m]indful of Him.

نفسا الا وسعها واذا قلتم فاعدلوا
ولو كان ذا قربى وبعهد الله اوفوا ط
ذلكم وصىكم به لعلكم تذكرون ﴿١٥٢﴾

The straight path of truth is but one. There can never be more than one way. So follow this one straight path and do not stray away from it into different directions.

[154] This is My way, that [w]hich is straight. So follow it, and do not (think) of following other ways lest ye divert from His path. This hath He enjoined on you that haply you may grow steady.

وان هذا صراطي مستقيما فاتبعوه
ولا تتبعوا السبل فتفرق بكم عن
سبيله ذلكم وصىكم به لعلكم تتقون ﴿١٥٣﴾

[155] Then We gave to Moses the Book, a complete book for him who acts righteously, a clean setting forth of everything, a guidance and a mercy that haply they might believe in their meeting with [th]eir Lord.

ثم اتينا موسى الكتب تماما على
الذي احسن وتفصيلا لكل شيء
وهدى ورحمة لعلهم بلقاء
ربهم يؤمنون ﴿١٥٤﴾ ع

SECTION 20

[156] Likewise blest is this Book also which We have sent down. So follow it and be mindful of God that haply you may find mercy.

وهذا كتب انزلنه مبرك فاتبعوه
واتقوا لعلكم ترحمون ﴿١٥٥﴾

[157] (O people of Arabia!) This is sent down lest ye should say: "The

ان تقولوا انما انزل الكتب على

Book was sent down only to two peoples (the Jews and the Christians) before us, but we are not aware whether they were read at all (diligently)".

طآئِفَتَيْنِ مِنْ قَبْلِنَا وَإِنْ كُنَّا
عَنْ دِرَاسَتِهِمْ لَغٰفِلِيْنَ ﴿١٥٦﴾

[158] Or lest you should say: "Had the Book been sent down to us, we should have followed its guidance better than they." Now a clear exposition hath come to you from your Lord, a guidance and a mercy. Who then is more wicked than he who treateth the revelations of God as lies and turneth away from them? (Remember) soon will We give to those who turn away from Our Revelations a severe chastisement for their turning away—(an admonition which was fulfilled in the discomfiture which overtook them ultimately).

أَوْ تَقُوْلُوْا لَوْ أَنَّآ أُنْزِلَ عَلَيْنَا الْكِتٰبُ
لَكُنَّآ أَهْدٰى مِنْهُمْ ۚ فَقَدْ جَآءَكُمْ
بَيِّنَةٌ مِّنْ رَّبِّكُمْ وَهُدًى وَّرَحْمَةٌ ۚ
فَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ كَذَّبَ بِاٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ
وَصَدَفَ عَنْهَا ۗ سَنَجْزِي الَّذِيْنَ
يَصْدِفُوْنَ عَنْ اٰيٰتِنَا سُوْٓءَ الْعَذَابِ
بِمَا كَانُوْا يَصْدِفُوْنَ ﴿١٥٧﴾

[159] Await they to see any angels coming down to them or thy Lord Himself coming down to them or (at least) signs of thy Lord (portending the Domesday)? On the day when the signs of thy Lord shall appear, no faith shall profit anyone who hath not believed therein before, nor done any good deeds in pursuance of his beliefs. Say: "Wait ye! we too will certainly wait (to see the issue settled between us by God)."

هَلْ يَنْظُرُوْنَ إِلَّآ أَنْ تَأْتِيَهُمُ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ
أَوْ يَأْتِيَ رَبُّكَ أَوْ يَأْتِيَ بَعْضُ اٰيٰتِ رَبِّكَ ۗ
يَوْمَ يَأْتِيْ بَعْضُ اٰيٰتِ رَبِّكَ لَا يَنْفَعُ
نَفْسًا إِيْمَانُهَا لَمْ تَكُنْ اٰمَنَتْ مِنْ
قَبْلُ أَوْ كَسَبَتْ فِيْٓ إِيْمَانِهَا خَيْرًا ۗ
قُلِ انْتَظِرُوْٓا إِنَّا مُنْتَظِرُوْنَ ﴿١٥٨﴾

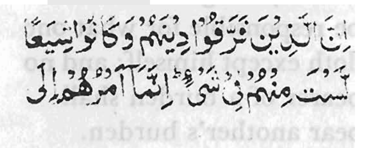
The error into which the followers of every religion have fallen is that they have created rifts in the body of their religion and divided themselves into sects or exclusive groups, each group resting the salvation of man not on goodness of life or on right belief and right action, but on loyalty to its own vagaries. The *Qur'ān* calls upon the Prophet not to have anything to do with such sectarian groups. What he was preaching to them was the religion proper and not the sectarianisms which they severally upheld.

In the preceding verses reference had been made to the *Torah* and the *Evangel* calling upon the people of Arabia not to advance any plea of ignorance of their existence, now that the *Qur'ān* hath come forward to endorse them. A perusal of them would convince every one that the religion which the Prophet was presenting for their acceptance was the very religion which the earlier scriptures had propounded. The *Qur'ān* in this manner makes it clear that religion has always been basically but one and the same for one and all, and never the sectarianism that man has developed in the course of history, and that the *Qur'ān* stands for this basic faith.

It was this basic faith which Abraham so effectively emphasised for the guidance of mankind. In his time, there were groups styling themselves as Jews or Christians. One and all worshipped but one God. They all believed in the principle: "Even as we sow, so do we reap". That was the religion of Abraham, his path, the straight path.

The chapter is rounded off with a reference to the historical phenomenon that one community succeeds another to uphold the cause of truth. In this connection the announcement is made that the hour is not far off when it will be the turn of the followers of the *Qur'ān* to take up His cause.

[160] There are those who had split their religion and divided themselves into sects: thou hast nothing to do with them since thy path is the



path laid down by God and so different from theirs). Their affair (therefore) is with God; and then He will point out to them what (exactly) they were doing.

اللهِ ثُمَّ يُنَبِّئُهُم بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْعَلُونَ ١٦٠

[161] (Say) "He who brings a good deed shall have ten times as much of goodness thereof, while he who brings an evil deed, shall be recompensed exactly with a like of it, and none shall be treated unjustly.

مَن جَآءَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُۥ عَشْرُ أَمْثَالِهَا ۖ
وَمَن جَآءَ بِالسَّيِّئَةِ فَلَا يُجْزَىٰٓ إِلَّا
مِثْلَهَا وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ١٦١

[162] Say: "Truly hath my Lord guided me to the straight way, the right way, the way followed by Abraham single-mindedly; and he was certainly not of those who had set up peers for God."

قُلْ إِنَّنِى هَدَىٰنِى رَبِّىٓ إِلَىٰ صِرَٰطٍ
مُّسْتَقِيمٍ دِينًا قِيَمًا مِّلَّةَ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ
حَنِيفًا ۚ وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ١٦٢

[163] Say: "My prayer and my sacrifice and my life and my death are all for God, the Lord of all Being,

قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِى وَنُسُكِى وَمَحْيَاىَ وَ
مَمَاتِى لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَٰلَمِينَ ١٦٣

[164] "Who hath no partner (whatsoever): thus have I been commanded to affirm and I am the first of those who have bowed to the command."

لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُۥ ۖ وَبِذَٰلِكَ أُمِرْتُ وَأَنَا۠
أَوَّلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ١٦٤

[165] (Ask them) "Shall I take for my Lord aught besides God when He is the cherisher and sustainer of everything?" No one shall be responsible for what one doth except himself; and no bearer of a burden shall bear another's burden. Eventually shall ye all

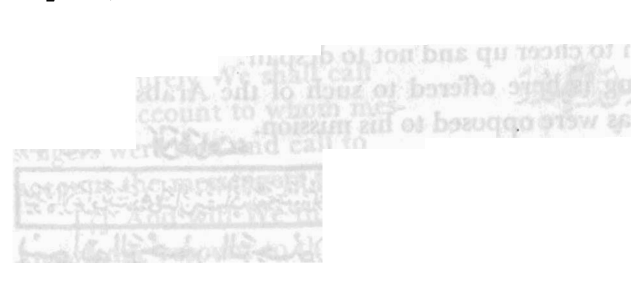
قُلْ أَغَيْرَ اللَّهِ أَبْغِى رَبًّا وَهُوَ رَبُّ
كُلِّ شَىْءٍ ۚ وَلَا تَكْسِبُ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ إِلَّا
عَلَيْهَا ۚ وَلَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَىٰ ۚ

return to Him; He will then make you realise that about which you were at variance.

ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُم مَّرْجِعُكُمْ فَيُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿١٦٥﴾

[166] It is He who hath appointed you to succeed one another on earth and raised some of you over others in diverse ways in order that He might try you in what He hath given you. Verily thy Lord is quick in meting out recompense and certainly He is also Forgiving, Merciful.

وَهُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَكُمْ خَلَٰٓئِفَ الْأَرْضِ وَرَفَعَ بَعْضَكُمْ فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ دَرَجَٰتٍ لِّيَبْلُوَكُمْ فِي مَآ ءَاتَىٰكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ سَرِيعُ الْعِقَابِ وَإِنَّهُ لَغَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٦٦﴾







CHAPTER VII

AL-'ARĀF—THE HEIGHTS

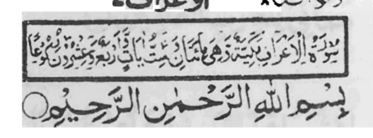
REVEALED AT MECCA

SECTION 1

(1) The function of divine revelation is two-fold. One is to announce to man the glad tiding that a good deed produces a good result. The other is to offer a warning to him to the effect that an evil deed produces an evil result.

(2) The task before the preachers of truth or reformers is a trying task calling for the exercise of patience and steadfastness in purpose. It is the function of Revelation to hearten them and strengthen their resolve to pursue their mission steadfastly in the strong hope that, whatever the obstacles that may cross their path, ultimate victory is theirs. Revelation therefore calls upon them to cheer up and not to despair.

(3) A warning is here offered to such of the Arabs of the Prophet's time as were opposed to his mission.



In the name of God, the Beneficient, the Merciful.

[1] Alīf, Lām, Mīm, Ṣād.

[2] This Book hath been sent down to thee—so let there be no misgiving whatsoever about it in thy mind —that thou mayest warn the erring thereby and that it might also be a monition to those who have faith.

[3] Follow what hath been sent down to you from your Lord and follow no patrons apart from Him—so little do ye care to be monished!

المٓصٓ ۝ كِتَٰبٌ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ فَلَا يَكُن فِي صَدْرِكَ حَرَجٌ مِّنْهُ لِتُنذِرَ بِهِۦ وَذِكْرَىٰ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۝

ٱتَّبِعُوا۟ مَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكُم مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا۟ مِن دُونِهِۦٓ أَوْلِيَآءَ ۗ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَذَكَّرُونَ ۝

(4) The history of man has demonstrated that those who had gone against the call of Truth had eventually to perish since such is the inevitable result of discarding the right way.

(5) On the Day of reckoning, the different communities of the Earth will be questioned whether they had paid heed to the call of truth, and likewise, the prophets or those who had to invite people to the path of truth, will be questioned whether they had properly fulfilled their role as preachers

[4] How many towns have We not brought to ruin—Our chastisement overtook them by night or while they were in their mid-day slumber.

وَكَم مِّن قَرْيَةٍ أَهْلَكْنَاهَا فَجَاءَهَا بَأْسُنَا بَيَاتًا أَوْ هُمْ قَائِلُونَ ﴿٤﴾

[5] Yet when our chastisement came to them, their cry indeed was: "Without doubt, were we wrong doers."

فَمَا كَانَ دَعْوَاهُمْ إِذْ جَاءَهُم بَأْسُنَا إِلَّا أَن قَالُوا إِنَّا كُنَّا ظَالِمِينَ ﴿٥﴾

[6] Surely We shall call those to account to whom messengers were sent and call to account the messengers themselves,

فَلَنَسْأَلَنَّ الَّذِينَ أُرْسِلَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَنَسْأَلَنَّ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿٦﴾

[7] And will We through Our knowledge recount to them (their deeds), since We were not (at any time) away from them.

فَلَنَقُصَّنَّ عَلَيْهِم بِعِلْمٍ وَمَا كُنَّا غَائِبِينَ ﴿٧﴾

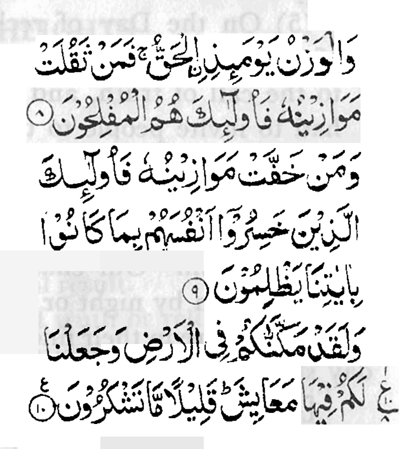
(6) The law of life fixed by God is this that everyone, whether an individual or a community, receives what one has worked for. He alone is to be regarded as having achieved success in life whose good deeds outnumber his shortcomings. Likewise, he will be regarded as having met in life with failure whose shortcomings or ill-deeds outweigh his good deeds. In the material transactions of life, we employ scales to weigh everything. In like manner, Nature has fixed its own scales whereby human deeds are weighed; and these scales never

fail in determining the character or value of every human deed.

[8] The weighing of one's deeds that day is a matter of certainty and they who weigh heavy in the scales, they alone shall prosper.

[9] And they whose scales are but light—they are those who have lost their souls, having disregarded Our messages.

[10] We have given you habitation on earth and also provided for you therein the supports of life, and yet how little gratitude do you show.



SECTION 2

(7) The *Qur'ān* here refers to the dawning on man, for the first time in his history, of the distinction between good and evil and the rise of prophets to direct men to the path of goodness:

(*a*) In the creative process of man, his being was first conceived and then given shape, till his being assumed the form of Adam or man, and attained a state of life when 'malāik' or angels were ordained to bow before him.

(*b*) The 'malāik' instantly obeyed the divine command. But one of them, viz. Iblis or Satan declined to obey.

(*c*) Adam, after a little while, fell into temptations and committed sin. But he soon regretted it and in humility offered his submission.

(*d*) Now there lay before man but two paths. One was what was appropriate to the nature of man, viz. the path of implicit obedience to the behest of God and of repentence over his lapses. The other was what was

appropriate to the nature of Iblis or Satan, viz. the path of disobedience marked by arrogance and impenitence. He who pursued the first path will not meet with failure.

(e) The law of life is here clearly indicated that whenever forces of evil are set in motion, they always produce evil results.

(f) Of course, a respite is allowed to everyone in the process of one's activity. This is conceded to the good and the bad alike. The truths of life are classified under two categories. One is that of the truths which concern what is beyond the ken of man or what he cannot perceive through his senses. The other relates to what man can perceive or see for himself. The origin of the human species concerns the domain of the unseen or what is beyond the mind of man to comprehend. Such being the limits of the human mind, it behoves man implicitly to believe in what knowledge is afforded to him of the unseeable through revealed scriptures. The history of man does not begin with the period covered by the *Torah*. Archaeology takes it far back into remoter ages. The researches made on the ancient site of Babylon confirm this idea, as also the things excavated in Chaldea and the paintings unearthed from the temple of Cyrus as also the hieroglophics of Egypt.

[11] Indeed we created you; then gave you shape; thereupon did we ask the angels: "Bow to Adam" and they all bowed except Iblis—for he was not of the bowing type.

[12] To him said God: "What prevented thee from bowing when I commanded thee?" He replied: "I am superior to him. Me thou hast created of fire and him of mere clay."

[13] He said: "Get ye out from

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنٰكُمْ ثُمَّ صَوَّرْنٰكُمْ ثُمَّ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ اسْجُدُوْا لِاٰدَمَ فَسَجَدُوْٓا اِلَّآ اِبْلِيْسَ لَمْ يَكُنْ مِّنَ السّٰجِدِيْنَ ﴿١١﴾

قَالَ مَا مَنَعَكَ اَلَّا تَسْجُدَ اِذْ اَمَرْتُكَ قَالَ اَنَا خَيْرٌ مِّنْهُ خَلَقْتَنِيْ مِنْ نَّارٍ وَّخَلَقْتَهٗ مِنْ طِيْنٍ ﴿١٢﴾

قَالَ فَاهْبِطْ مِنْهَا فَمَا يَكُوْنُ لَكَ اَنْ

here. Thou can't afford to display thy pride here. Get thee out; verily thou shalt be of the despised."

تتكبر فيها فاخرج إنك من الصٰغرين ﴿١٣﴾

[14] He said: "Respite me till the day they revive."

قال أنظرني إلى يوم يبعثون ﴿١٤﴾

[15] He (God) said: "Be thou then of the respited."

قال إنك من المنظرين ﴿١٥﴾

[16] He said: "Now that Thou hast turned me away, will I surely lie in wait for them across Thy straight path.

قال فبما أغويتني لأقعدن لهم
صراطك المستقيم ﴿١٦﴾

[17] "Then will I come upon them from in front of them and from behind them, from their right side and from their left and then Thou shall find few of them truly loyal to Thee."

ثم لآتينهم من بين أيديهم ومن
خلفهم وعن أيمانهم وعن شمائلهم
ولا تجد أكثرهم شٰكرين ﴿١٧﴾

[18] He said: "Get thee begone from here disgraced and turned out. If any of them shall follow thee, with them all shall I surely fill Hell.

قال اخرج منها مذءوما مدحورا لمن
تبعك منهم لأملأن جهنم منكم أجمعين ﴿١٨﴾

[19] And, O Adam! dwell thou and thy mate in the garden and eat ye both from wherever ye please, but approach not yonder tree, lest ye be of those who do wrong."

ويٰآدم اسكن أنت وزوجك الجنة
فكلا من حيث شئتما ولا تقربا
هٰذه الشجرة فتكونا من الظٰلمين ﴿١٩﴾

[20] Then Satan instigated them to reveal to themselves their private parts which hath lain till then unnoticed by them. And said: "Your Lord hath forbidden you to taste anything of this tree in order that you should never grow into angels or attain immortality."

فوسوس لهما الشيطٰن ليبدي لهما
ما وري عنهما من سوءٰتهما وقال
ما نهٰكما ربكما عن هٰذه الشجرة إلا
أن تكونا ملكين أو تكونا من الخٰلدين ﴿٢٠﴾

[21] And he swore to them both: "I am unto you verily one who offereth the right counsel."

وقاسمهما إني لكما لمن النٰصحين ﴿٢١﴾

[22] It was in this way that he

فدلىٰهما بغرور فلما ذاقا الشجرة

beguiled them by deceit, and when they had tasted of the tree, the significance of their private parts dawned on them and they began to cover themselves with the leaves of the garden.

And their Lord called to them: "Did I not forbid you to touch that tree and say to you, 'Satan verily to you is an avowed enemy'?"

بَدَتْ لَهُمَا سَوْاٰتُهُمَا وَطَفِقَا يَخْصِفٰنِ عَلَيْهِمَا مِنْ وَّرَقِ الْجَنَّةِ ۖ وَنَادٰىهُمَا رَبُّهُمَآ اَلَمْ اَنْهَكُمَا عَنْ تِلْكُمَا الشَّجَرَةِ وَاَقُلْ لَّكُمَآ اِنَّ الشَّيْطٰنَ لَكُمَا عَدُوٌّ مُّبِيْنٌ ﴿٢٢﴾

[23] They said: "O our Lord! Indeed have we wronged ourselves and unless Thou shouldst pardon us and have pity on us, we shall surely be of those who are lost."

قَالَا رَبَّنَا ظَلَمْنَآ اَنْفُسَنَا ۫ وَاِنْ لَّمْ تَغْفِرْ لَنَا وَتَرْحَمْنَا لَنَكُوْنَنَّ مِنَ الْخٰسِرِيْنَ ﴿٢٣﴾

[24] He said: "Get ye out, the one of you an enemy to the other; and on earth shall ye have your stay and means of support for a term."

قَالَ اهْبِطُوْا بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ ۚ وَلَكُمْ فِي الْاَرْضِ مُسْتَقَرٌّ وَّمَتَاعٌ اِلٰى حِيْنٍ ﴿٢٤﴾

[25] He said: "On it shall ye have to live and on it shall ye have to die and from it shall ye be taken out."

قَالَ فِيْهَا تَحْيَوْنَ وَفِيْهَا تَمُوْتُوْنَ وَمِنْهَا تُخْرَجُوْنَ ﴿٢٥﴾

Section 3

(8) Verses 26 to 36 are addressed to the children of Adam. They deal with the instructions given to them while they first began to spread over the earth.

(*a*) In the resources of the earth, God had provided them with the means of covering their bodies, assuring for them thereby bodily protection and a cultured life. Alongside of this, He had provided them with the means of covering or protecting their inward self, and this was

in the form of goodness of life outlined for them through revelation. The one was to promote the welfare of their bodies, the other of their souls.

(*b*) Material provisions of life are the gift of God meant to offer bodily comfort to man. It is not meet therefore for man to shun them. That is not living a good life. On the other hand, these provisions are meant to be made use of by man in a manner worthy of him both during the hours of his mundane activity and his communion with God.

(*c*) Make use of the provisions of the earth freely. Eat and drink as you will without falling into extravagance. The basis of good life is to profit by every means of comfort life offers to man. The only caution is that nothing should be done in excess. This was the basic truth that was first imparted to the race of man or of Adam.

(*d*) The way of God has been to raise for mankind prophets to guide them in the conduct of their lives. He who takes to the right path prospers; and he who goes the wrong way suffers in consequence.

The attention drawn here to the need which the first generation of mankind felt for covering their bodies both outwardly and inwardly is to mark the first stage in their intellectual development when the urge was felt by them to leave behind their animal way of living and move on towards a cultured life.

(9) Such was the way of life chalked out for man. But man deviated from this path in the course of his history and wilfully began to go his own way. Verse 28 of the Chapter points out that this waywardness on the part of man was primarily due to the tendency that he had developed to imitate blindly the ways of his forbears. That was exactly the attitude displayed by the Meccans in the time of the Prophet of Islam.

(10) Verse 29 draws attention to three basic principles which underlie the plan of life marked out by God. They were: (1) Balance in thought and living. (2) Attention in

prayer and (3) Sincerity in devotion to God. These form the basis on which the belief in the unity of God rests. Life, therefore, is to be pursued along the path laid by God and with earnest devotion to Him.

(11) An announcement is here made that the urge to seek wordly comfort does not run counter to one's spiritual devotion to God. On the other hand, to utilise in one's own living the means of material comfort is indeed to conform to the Divine wish itself. It is why the first instruction given to the children of Adam was this that they should attire themselves properly, when they were in a state of prayer.

A notion had prevailed for ages among the followers of every religion as sponsored by their religious leaders that spiritual progress was not attainable except by discarding the material amenities of life. The *Qur'ān* discountenances this notion strongly. The material means of comfort are provided by Nature not to be shunned in sheer wilfulness but to be properly utilised for the benefit of man. Indeed to exploit aright the resources of the earth is to fulfil the will of God Himself.

The *Qur'ān* makes it clear that all that is provided in the earth is for the use of man One has to make use of them to promote one's comfort and happiness. The only caution given is that one should not fall into excess. The use of the material means of comfort is not repugnant to spiritual progress.

The means of human comfort or the things which lend dignity to human life and which professional religious leaders had regarded as repugnant to a life of devotion to God are styled by the *Qur'ān* as "Zīnathullah" or the very things which display the dignity of God. This is a revolutionary declaration of the *Qur'ān*. It has shaken the very foundations of the old religious thought that material living was repugnant to spiritual progress and gives to man the heartening assurance that true spiritual progress is to be sought in active material pursuits.

The term "Zīnath" comprehends not only the natural

necessities of life but even such amenities as comely dress and delicious food.

(12) It has been emphasised in verse 34 that the laws of life which govern the success and failure in life of an individual do also operate inexorably in the lives of the communities or nations as well, and thus govern their rise and fall. When a community or group of people persist in wicked living or in oppressing others, there comes a stage when the law of retribution at work in life overtakes them.

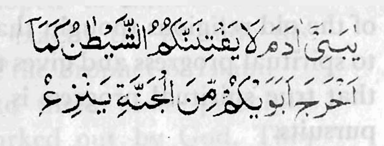
The verse, by its underlying implication, is intended to be a warning to those leading members of the Arab community who would not give up their evil way of living. It announces to them that the hour of retribution is at hand and that unless they make amends betimes, they will have to answer grievously for their misdeeds.

(13) Verse 35 brings to mind the original divine promise held out to the children of Adam that from time to time they would receive divine guidance by means of revelation. It is in pursuance of this promise that a prophet has arisen among them to show them the path that leads to success in life. The coming events will decide the issue between him and those who disagree with him.

[26] O children of Adam! Now have We inspired you to have garments to hide your nakedness and be also an adornment to you. But remember that the garment that stimulates not evil promptings is the best of garments. Such a garment is one of the signs (of remembrance) of God that men may reflect on.

يَٰبَنِيٓ ءَادَمَ قَدۡ أَنزَلۡنَا عَلَيۡكُمۡ لِبَاسٗا يُوَٰرِي سَوۡءَٰتِكُمۡ وَرِيشٗاۖ وَلِبَاسُ ٱلتَّقۡوَىٰ ذَٰلِكَ خَيۡرٞۚ ذَٰلِكَ مِنۡ ءَايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ لَعَلَّهُمۡ يَذَّكَّرُونَ ٢٦

[27] O children of Adam! let not Satan lead astray even as he led your parents out of the Garden stripping them of their raiment that they might behold their own nakedness.



He sees you, he and his tribe, from a place where you cannot see them. Verily We have made satans patrons of those who believe not.

عنهما لباسهما ليريهما سوءتهما انه يريكم هو وقبيله من حيث لا ترونهم انا جعلنا الشيطين اولياء للذين لا يؤمنون ۝

[28] Whenever they commit a shameful thing, they say: "We found our fathers doing it and God also hath commanded us to do it." Say to them: "Surely God directeth not (anyone) to deeds of shame. Do you foist on God that which you yourself know not?"

واذا فعلوا فاحشة قالوا وجدنا عليها اباءنا والله امرنا بها قل ان الله لا يامر بالفحشاء اتقولون على الله ما لا تعلمون ۝

[29] Say: "My Lord hath enjoined what is right. Be steadfast in prayer at each time of prayer and call upon Him in sincere devotion to Him. Remember that since He has given you your very being, you in your own turn have to acquit yourselves before Him."

قل امر ربي بالقسط واقيموا وجوهكم عند كل مسجد وادعوه مخلصين له الدين كما بداكم تعودون ۝

[30] Some hath He guided and while there are some others who have justly met the penalty of error, for, surely they have taken satans for their patrons instead of God and had fancied that they had been guided aright.

فريقا هدى وفريقا حق عليهم الضللة انهم اتخذوا الشيطين اولياء من دون الله ويحسبون انهم مهتدون ۝

[31] O children of Adam! Put on your goodly apparel when ye repair to a mosque. Eat and drink but nothing in excess. God does not like those who indulge in excesses.

يبني ادم خذوا زينتكم عند كل مسجد وكلوا واشربوا ولا تسرفوا انه لا يحب المسرفين ۝

SECTION 4

[32] Say (to them), "Who hath forbidden the use of goodly apparel which

قل من حرم زينة الله التي اخرج

God hath made available to His servants and articles of food that are wholesome?" Say: "These will be given in a state of purity on the day of Resurrection to those who have been believers in their earthly life." Thus do We make our signs clear for a people who understand.

لِعِبَادِهٖ وَالطَّيِّبٰتِ مِنَ الرِّزْقِ قُلْ
هِيَ لِلَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا فِي الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا
خَالِصَةً يَّوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ كَذٰلِكَ نُفَصِّلُ
الْاٰيٰتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَّعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٣٢﴾

[33] Say: "My Lord hath forbidden indecencies committed either openly or in secret, and iniquity and unjust rebellion, and associating aught with God for which He hath sent down no warranty and attributing to God anything of which you have no knowledge."

قُلْ اِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ رَبِّيَ الْفَوَاحِشَ مَا
ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَنَ وَالْاِثْمَ وَالْبَغْيَ
بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ وَاَنْ تُشْرِكُوْا بِاللّٰهِ مَا لَمْ
يُنَزِّلْ بِهٖ سُلْطٰنًا وَّاَنْ تَقُوْلُوْا عَلَى
اللّٰهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٣٣﴾

[34] Every people have a term set for them; when the appointed time comes, they shall neither retard it an hour nor advance it.

وَلِكُلِّ اُمَّةٍ اَجَلٌ فَاِذَا جَآءَ اَجَلُهُمْ
لَا يَسْتَاْخِرُوْنَ سَاعَةً وَّلَا يَسْتَقْدِمُوْنَ ﴿٣٤﴾

[35] O children of Adam! When apostles arise from among you announcing to you My directives, then whosoever take heed and correct themselves, no fear shall come upon them, nor shall they grieve.

يٰبَنِيْٓ اٰدَمَ اِمَّا يَاْتِيَنَّكُمْ رُسُلٌ مِّنْكُمْ
يَقُصُّوْنَ عَلَيْكُمْ اٰيٰتِيْ فَمَنِ اتَّقٰى وَ
اَصْلَحَ فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ
يَحْزَنُوْنَ ﴿٣٥﴾

[36] But they who discredit our directives and feel too proud to yield to them—such shall be the inmates of Fire; therein shall they abide.

وَالَّذِيْنَ كَذَّبُوْا بِاٰيٰتِنَا وَاسْتَكْبَرُوْا عَنْهَآ
اُولٰٓئِكَ اَصْحٰبُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيْهَا خٰلِدُوْنَ ﴿٣٦﴾

(14) In the following verses, a picture is outlined of what awaits the wicked in the life-hereafter.

Verse 38 points out that whenever a group of people lives in iniquity or goes the wrong way misled by others, and yet in its turn spreads its contagion to others and inevitably draws them to the wrong way, will complain to God on the day of

judgment against those who had induced them to live wrongly. The announcement is made that those who had lived wrongly and helped others to live wrongly will have to share the consequence doubly.

[37] Who is more unjust than he who foists a lie on God or discredits His directives? Such shall enjoy in full what is apportioned to them under Our decree till our agents who bring death to them say: "Where are they ye had invoked beside God?" They will then say: "They have forsaken us"; they will admit that they indeed were (foolishly) unyielding.

فَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ افْتَرَىٰ عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا
أَوْ كَذَّبَ بِآيَاتِهِ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ يَنَالُهُمْ نَصِيبُهُم
مِّنَ الْكِتَابِ ۖ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُنَا
يَتَوَفَّوْنَهُمْ قَالُوا أَيْنَ مَا كُنتُمْ تَدْعُونَ
مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ ۖ قَالُوا ضَلُّوا عَنَّا وَشَهِدُوا
عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ أَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا كَافِرِينَ ﴿٣٧﴾

[38] He will say: "Enter ye into the Fire to dwell in the company of those jinns and men who have already preceded you."

So oft as a fresh batch entereth, it shall curse the batch immediately preceding it till when they have all reached it, the last comers shall, pointing to those immediately preceding them, say: "O our Lord! These were they who had led us astray; therefore mete out to them a double torment of the fire." He will say: "Two-fold torment shall there be for each one of you, (for each was doubly responsible in turn) although ye may not be fully aware of it."

قَالَ ادْخُلُوا فِي أُمَمٍ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِن
قَبْلِكُم مِّنَ الْجِنِّ وَالْإِنسِ فِي النَّارِ ۖ كُلَّمَا
دَخَلَتْ أُمَّةٌ لَّعَنَتْ أُخْتَهَا ۖ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا
ادَّارَكُوا فِيهَا جَمِيعًا قَالَتْ أُخْرَاهُمْ
لِأُولَاهُمْ رَبَّنَا هَٰؤُلَاءِ أَضَلُّونَا فَآتِهِمْ
عَذَابًا ضِعْفًا مِّنَ النَّارِ ۖ قَالَ لِكُلٍّ
ضِعْفٌ وَلَٰكِن لَّا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾

[39] And those coming before will say to those coming after: "Ye are no better than us. Taste

وَقَالَتْ أُولَاهُمْ لِأُخْرَاهُمْ فَمَا كَانَ لَكُمْ عَلَيْنَا

ye now the torment that ye have worked for."

من فضل فذوقوا العذاب بما كنتم تكسبون ﴿٣٩﴾

SECTION 5

(15) In the following verses a picture is outlined of the life which awaits those in the life-hereafter who had lived a good life.

In the immediately preceding verses, it had been given out that on the day of judgment, those who had lived a wicked life under the influence of wicked people will complain against those who had induced them to evil living. The attitude of those who had lived a good life would be something different. They were never in the habit of entertaining any ill-will against anybody and will now speak nothing against any one. That is the difference between the evil-minded and the good. The mind which each of the two types had developed severally in their lives on earth will cling to them even in the life-hereafter.

[40] Verily to those who have discredited Our directives and ignored them in their pride, the gates of heavens shall not open; it is not possible for them to enter Paradise even as it is not possible for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle. Thus do we requite the wrong-doers.

إن الذين كذبوا بآياتنا واستكبروا عنها لا تفتح لهم أبواب السماء ولا يدخلون الجنة حتى يلج الجمل في سم الخياط وكذلك نجزي المجرمين ﴿٤٠﴾

[41] For them Hell shall serve as their coverings. Thus do We requite the unjust.

لهم من جهنم مهاد ومن فوقهم غواش وكذلك نجزي الظالمين ﴿٤١﴾

[42] But they who have believed in God and done that which is right—We lay not on any one a burden too heavy to bear—shall be the inmates of the Garden to abide therein forever.

والذين آمنوا وعملوا الصالحات لا نكلف نفسا إلا وسعها أولئك أصحاب الجنة هم فيها خالدون ﴿٤٢﴾

[43] We shall remove from their breasts every sense of grievance (towards anyone); and cause streams to roll before them, so much so that they shall say: "Praise be to God who hath guided us hither! Never would we have guided ourselves hither, had not God given us the right direction. It was indeed the truth which the apostles brought to us from Our Lord." And a voice shall cry to them: "This is Paradise of which as a return for your deeds ye are made heirs."

وَنَزَعْنَا مَا فِي صُدُورِهِم مِّنْ غِلٍّ
تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهِمُ الْأَنْهَارُ ۖ وَقَالُوا الْحَمْدُ
لِلَّهِ الَّذِي هَدَانَا لِهَٰذَا وَمَا كُنَّا لِنَهْتَدِيَ
لَوْلَا أَنْ هَدَانَا اللَّهُ ۖ لَقَدْ جَاءَتْ
رُسُلُ رَبِّنَا بِالْحَقِّ ۖ وَنُودُوا أَن تِلْكُمُ
الْجَنَّةُ أُورِثْتُمُوهَا بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

[44] And the inmates of the Garden shall cry to the inmates of the Fire: "Now have We truly secured what our Lord hath promised us. Have ye too truly secured what your Lord hath promised you?" And they shall answer: "Yes." And a herald will proclaim between them: "The malison of God shall rest on the wrong-doers."

وَنَادَىٰ أَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ أَصْحَابَ النَّارِ أَن
قَدْ وَجَدْنَا مَا وَعَدَنَا رَبُّنَا حَقًّا فَهَلْ
وَجَدتُّم مَّا وَعَدَ رَبُّكُمْ حَقًّا ۖ قَالُوا نَعَمْ ۚ
فَأَذَّنَ مُؤَذِّنٌ بَيْنَهُمْ أَن لَّعْنَةُ اللَّهِ
عَلَى الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٤٤﴾

[45] "Who turn men aside from the way of God and seek to make it appear crooked and who believe not in the life to come."

الَّذِينَ يَصُدُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَ
يَبْغُونَهَا عِوَجًا وَهُم بِالْآخِرَةِ كَافِرُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾

(16) When we have to partition a plot of ground, we usually raise a wall to mark the division. The *Qur'ān* suggests the alignment of Heaven and Hell corresponds to such a division. In the chapter of the *Qur'ān* entitled "Al-Hadid or IRON", it is stated that there is a door in the partition wall separating Heaven from Hell (Q 57: 13).

The *Qur'ān* designates this partition wall as *'Arāf*. The term is applied to every form of projection from the surface of the earth. The partition between Hell and Heaven is so

devised that from the top of it one may easily have a view of what is happening on either side.

Those who have the gift of probing the reality of things will find that in every sphere of life and in every aspect of it, Hell and Heaven function in close proximity with each other. One is so close to the other that one wrong step forward pushes you into a state of hell.

[46] And between the two (the inmates of Paradise and the inmates of Fire) there shall be heights of partition and on the heights shall be men who will recognise all (on either side of it) by their visage. They will hail the people of Paradise saying: "Peace be on you." But these men have not yet entered it though they ardently expect to do so.

وَبَيْنَهُمَا حِجَابٌ ۚ وَعَلَى الْأَعْرَافِ رِجَالٌ
يَعْرِفُونَ كُلًّا بِسِيمٰهُمْ ۚ وَنَادَوْا أَصْحٰبَ الْجَنَّةِ
أَنْ سَلٰمٌ عَلَيْكُمْ ۚ لَمْ يَدْخُلُوهَا وَهُمْ يَطْمَعُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾

[47] And when their eyes turn towards the inmates of the Fire, they (in awe) cry out: "Our Lord! Do not let us dwell with those who are wicked!"

وَإِذَا صُرِفَتْ أَبْصَارُهُمْ تِلْقَاءَ أَصْحٰبِ
النَّارِ ۙ قَالُوا رَبَّنَا لَا تَجْعَلْنَا مَعَ الْقَوْمِ
الظّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾

Section 6

[48] And the men who are on the heights will cry to those whom they shall recognise by their visage: "What have your amassings and your pride availed you?'

وَنَادٰى أَصْحٰبُ الْأَعْرَافِ رِجَالًا يَعْرِفُونَهُمْ
بِسِيمٰهُمْ قَالُوا مَا أَغْنٰى عَنْكُمْ جَمْعُكُمْ
وَمَا كُنْتُمْ تَسْتَكْبِرُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾

[49] (Pointing to the dwellers of Paradise they will continue) "Are these not the same people on whom you used to swear that God would never bestow mercy?" (On

أَهٰؤُلَاءِ الَّذِينَ أَقْسَمْتُمْ لَا يَنَالُهُمُ اللّٰهُ

the other hand the mercy of God is announcing to them): "Enter ye into Paradise where no fear shall overtake you, nor shall ye be put to any grief."

بِرَحْمَةٍ ۚ ادْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْكُمْ
وَلَا أَنْتُمْ تَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾

[50] And the inmates of the Fire shall cry to the inmates of Paradise: "Pour upon us some water or give us a portion of whatever provisions God hath bestowed upon you." They will reply: "God hath forbidden both to unbelievers,

وَنَادَىٰ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ أَصْحَابَ الْجَنَّةِ
أَنْ أَفِيضُوا عَلَيْنَا مِنَ الْمَاءِ أَوْ مِمَّا
رَزَقَكُمُ اللَّهُ ۚ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ حَرَّمَهُمَا
عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٥٠﴾

[51] "Who had made of their religion but a sport and a pastime and enticed themselves in the life of the world." Therefore will We this day take no notice of them even as they had failed to remember that they were to face this their day, and had lightly treated Our signs.

الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا دِينَهُمْ لَهْوًا وَلَعِبًا وَ
غَرَّتْهُمُ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا ۚ فَالْيَوْمَ
نَنْسَاهُمْ كَمَا نَسُوا لِقَاءَ يَوْمِهِمْ هَٰذَا
وَمَا كَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يَجْحَدُونَ ﴿٥١﴾

(16 *Contd.*) The *Qur'ān* now turns to those who have declined to recognise it. It states that the appearance of the *Qur'ān* is in accordance with the announcement made from time to time to the children of Adam. Its purpose is to show the path of knowledge and insight. Why then do people set their face against its teachings and continue to indulge in wrong living? Do they wish to see the consequence of their wrong living disclose itself before them? They shall have no time for any respite when that overtakes them. That will be the hour of judgment.

[52] And surely have We already given them a Book offering in a clear manner knowledge and gui-

وَلَقَدْ جِئْنَاهُمْ بِكِتَابٍ فَصَّلْنَاهُ عَلَىٰ
عِلْمٍ هُدًى وَرَحْمَةً لِقَوْمٍ

dance—a blessing to those who believe.

[53] Do they wait to see the results (of disorderliness and evil activity against which they were warned therein? If this is what they wait for, then) on the day when the results of what they were warned against will manifest themselves, those who had neglected to be mindful of it will (in utter despair) cry out: "Verily had the apostles of our Lord brought us the Truth. (Woe be to us that we discarded it.) Are there any who will intercede for us or can we be sent back that we might act differently from what we had acted before?" They indeed have themselves courted ruin and all the images of their fancy have now forsaken them.

يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾

هَلْ يَنظُرُونَ إِلَّا تَأْوِيلَهُ يَوْمَ يَأْتِي تَأْوِيلُهُ يَقُولُ الَّذِينَ نَسُوهُ مِن قَبْلُ قَدْ جَاءَتْ رُسُلُ رَبِّنَا بِالْحَقِّ فَهَل لَّنَا مِن شُفَعَاءَ فَيَشْفَعُوا لَنَا أَوْ نُرَدُّ فَنَعْمَلَ غَيْرَ الَّذِي كُنَّا نَعْمَلُ قَدْ خَسِرُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ وَضَلَّ عَنْهُم مَّا كَانُوا يَفْتَرُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾ ع

Section 7

(17) The *Qur'ān* now goes on to emphasise that the entire world of creation owes its existence to but one being, namely God,[1] and is at work under His direction or with the power furnished by Him. There is none else to run this machinery of life.

The *Qur'ān* states that God is "Seated on His throne"

[1] The idea of the unity of God postulates that there is no being except God deserving of devotion since it is He alone who has brought into being everything in the universe and none else. The unity which prevails in the world of phenomenon or the universe is by itself a proof of the unity of God; for it is He who has given rise to this universe and who regulates and controls the life of everything therein and its relation with every other. So, when there is only one creator, and the world of creation is but one, it follows that none should think of setting up a peer for God.

By this it means that the sovereignty of God is supreme. He it is who has created the universe and He it is who regulates its working. All life is dependent on Him.

[54] Verily it is your Lord God who in six cycles of time created the heavens and the earth. Then did He mount the throne (the seat of His power and splendour). He letteth the night cover the day seeking it speedily, and the Sun and the Moon and the Stars follow His bidding. Yes! His it is to bring (a thing) into being and to control it. Blessed be God the sustainer of all life.

إِنَّ رَبَّكُمُ اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَٰوَٰتِ
وَالْأَرْضَ فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ
عَلَى الْعَرْشِ يُغْشِي الَّيْلَ النَّهَارَ
يَطْلُبُهُ حَثِيثًا وَالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ وَ
النُّجُومَ مُسَخَّرَٰتٍ بِأَمْرِهِ أَلَا لَهُ الْخَلْقُ
وَالْأَمْرُ تَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٥٤﴾

(18) From verse 55 onward the chapter reverts to the subject with which it begins, viz. that the mission of the *Qur'ān* will, despite every obstacle, succeed in the end, and that therefore those who believe should never feel constricted at heart. Indeed, in the very next verse (56), the *Qur'ān* states that Divine graciousness never deserts the good or those who live good lives.

In verse 57, the *Qur'ān* presents an analogy. When it is to rain, winds laden with clouds begin to blow; and then comes down rain and the dead or parched earth revives and puts forth greenary, and foliage. This is exactly the case with Revelation which revolutionises human life. At first, signs of the coming change put in their appearance; then follows the process of reformation and this infuses fresh life into dead spirits. The winds laden with rain, points out the *Qur'ān*, have now begun to blow. Surely you can now expect the manifestation of Divine blessings.

But be it noted that only that piece of land will profit by rain which possesses the capacity to do so. The saltish soil does not profit by it: it cannot put forth foliage. In like

manner, only those souls will derive benefit from the *Qur'ān* who have developed the talent to respond to its call. Those who have not done so should not expect to gain anything from it.

(19) With the verse 58 begins the account of the earlier Revelations.

This is done to emphasise that no one should feel surprised at the revolution which a divine message works in human life. A divine revelation being a message of Truth has always overcome all obstacles crossing its path.

(*A*) In this connection, the mission of the prophet Noah is cited who worked among the people dwelling in the land of the Euphrates and Tigris which is regarded as the earliest cradle of civilisation and where probably idolatory had made its first appearance. It was probably in this area that humanity appears to have deviated for the first time from the path of guidance which Nature had ingrained in the make-up of man.

[55] Invoke your Lord in lowliness and in silence. Verily He loveth not those who do not observe proprieties.

ادْعُوا رَبَّكُمْ تَضَرُّعًا وَخُفْيَةً ۚ إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ ﴿٥٥﴾

[56] Do not, after the restoration of order in the land (resulting from the Qur'ānic call for an ordered life), do anything to disturb it and call upon Him in fear and hope; indeed the mercy of God is always close to those who do good.

وَلَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ بَعْدَ إِصْلَاحِهَا وَادْعُوهُ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا ۚ إِنَّ رَحْمَتَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ مِنَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٥٦﴾

[57] And He it is who sendeth forth the winds spreading the tidings of the blessings to follow till they bring up the laden clouds to move along to some dry spot of land so as to pour down water thereupon to cause therewith an up-growth of all kinds of fruit. In like manner, do

وَهُوَ الَّذِي يُرْسِلُ الرِّيَاحَ بُشْرًا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ رَحْمَتِهِ ۖ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا أَقَلَّتْ سَحَابًا ثِقَالًا سُقْنَاهُ لِبَلَدٍ مَيِّتٍ فَأَنْزَلْنَا بِهِ الْمَاءَ فَأَخْرَجْنَا بِهِ مِنْ كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ ۚ

we revive those who are lost to life, if only ye can reflect over.

كَذٰلِكَ نُخْرِجُ الْمَوْتٰى لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُوْنَ ﴿٥٧﴾

(*B*) "I have received from God a knowledge of things such as is not directly possible for you to know."

The *Qur'ān* asserts that such was the statement which every prophet had made to the people around Him. The intellect of man cannot comprehend what is beyond its reach.

The prophets have announced that they had been vouchsafed the means or the Revelation whereby they could have the knowledge of that to which the human intellect had no access. Since man has no means to refute this Revelation and since it is not possible for him to solve the mystery of life without its aid, it behoves him to bow before the Divine Revelation which the *Qur'ān* has presented for the good of man. If he fails to respond to it, he will have to live a life full of doubts and uncertainties.

[58] In a rich soil plants spring forth in abundance by the will of its Lord and in that which is not so, they spring forth but scantily. Thus in varying ways do We make things clear for those who gratefully respond to Our call.

وَالْبَلَدُ الطَّيِّبُ يَخْرُجُ نَبَاتُهٗ بِاِذْنِ رَبِّهٖ ۚ وَالَّذِىْ خَبُثَ لَا يَخْرُجُ اِلَّا نَكِدًا ؕ كَذٰلِكَ نُصَرِّفُ الْاٰيٰتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَّشْكُرُوْنَ ﴿٥٨﴾

SECTION 8

[59] Of old did We send Noah to his people (in order that he may spread Our message among them). He said to them: "O my people! serve God; ye have no god but Him. Indeed, I fear for you the chastisement of the Great day.

لَقَدْ اَرْسَلْنَا نُوْحًا اِلٰى قَوْمِهٖ فَقَالَ يٰقَوْمِ اعْبُدُوا اللّٰهَ مَا لَكُمْ مِّنْ اِلٰهٍ غَيْرُهٗ ؕ اِنِّىْ اَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيْمٍ ﴿٥٩﴾

[60] Said the elders of the people:

قَالَ الْمَلَاُ مِنْ قَوْمِهٖۤ اِنَّا لَنَرٰىكَ

"Verily, We see that thou hast fallen into a palpable error."

فِىْ ضَلٰلٍ مُّبِيْنٍ ﴿٦٠﴾

[61] He said: "O my people! I have not fallen into my error. I am indeed a messenger from the Lord of all Being.

قَالَ يٰقَوْمِ لَيْسَ بِىْ ضَلٰلَةٌ وَّلٰكِنِّىْ رَسُوْلٌ مِّنْ رَّبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿٦١﴾

[62] "I bring to you the message of my Lord and I give you my friendly Counsel; for I know from God what ye know not.

اُبَلِّغُكُمْ رِسٰلٰتِ رَبِّىْ وَاَنْصَحُ لَكُمْ وَاَعْلَمُ مِنَ اللّٰهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٦٢﴾

[63] "Does it cause you wonder that a word should come to you from Your Lord through a man from amidst you, to admonish you, so that you may fear for yourselves, and abstain from evil and (and by so doing) receive mercy."

اَوَعَجِبْتُمْ اَنْ جَآءَكُمْ ذِكْرٌ مِّنْ رَّبِّكُمْ عَلٰى رَجُلٍ مِّنْكُمْ لِيُنْذِرَكُمْ وَلِتَتَّقُوْا وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُوْنَ ﴿٦٣﴾

[64] But they treated him as a liar; so (when the deluge came) We rescued him and those with him in the ark, and We drowned those who treated Our messages as false: (so lost were they to reason) that they behaved like blind people.

فَكَذَّبُوْهُ فَاَنْجَيْنٰهُ وَالَّذِيْنَ مَعَهٗ فِى الْفُلْكِ وَاَغْرَقْنَا الَّذِيْنَ كَذَّبُوْا بِاٰيٰتِنَا ۚ اِنَّهُمْ كَانُوْا قَوْمًا عَمِيْنَ ﴿٦٤﴾

SECTION 9

(*C*) After the tribe of Noah, the tribe of "Ād" came into prominence. They were spread over the territory extending from Amman to Hadrmouth and Yeman. The prophet Hūd belonged to this tribe. His teachings were disregarded by his people due to blind adherence to tradition.

The greatest obstacle confronting every missionary effort in the cause of Truth has very often been this blind adherence to some fancied tradition.

In the beginning, through sheer ignorance, a belief takes currency. For a while this belief takes hold of their minds: so

much so that in due course, this belief assumes such sanctity that people feel it a sacrilege to question it and hardly care to listen to reason. They cannot advance in their support anything except a few terms or a few names of some of those who were their forbears.

It is a pity that even the followers of the *Qur'ān* calling themselves Muslims have coined for themselves some such terms and names under which they take shelter for lack of valid argument.

[65] And to the tribe of 'Ād' did We send (one of their kinsfolk, namely) Hūd. Said he to them: "O my people! Serve God. Ye have no God other than Him. Will ye not then beware of the consequences of denying Him?"

وَإِلَىٰ عَادٍ أَخَاهُمْ هُودًا ۗ قَالَ يَٰقَوْمِ
ٱعْبُدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ مَا لَكُم مِّنْ إِلَٰهٍ غَيْرُهُۥٓ ۚ أَ
فَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾

[66] The unbelieving elders of His tribe said: "We certainly see that thou art unsound of mind and we surely deem you an impostor."

قَالَ ٱلْمَلَأُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ مِن قَوْمِهِۦٓ إِنَّا لَنَرَىٰكَ
فِى سَفَاهَةٍ وَإِنَّا لَنَظُنُّكَ مِنَ ٱلْكَٰذِبِينَ ﴿٦٦﴾

[67] He said: "O my people! I am certainly not unsound of mind but am an apostle from the Lord of all Being.

قَالَ يَٰقَوْمِ لَيْسَ بِى سَفَاهَةٌ وَلَٰكِنِّى
رَسُولٌ مِّن رَّبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٦٧﴾

[68] "I only announce to you whatever message I receive from my Lord and for that reason I am your well-meaning counseller.

أُبَلِّغُكُمْ رِسَٰلَٰتِ رَبِّى وَأَنَا۠ لَكُمْ نَاصِحٌ
أَمِينٌ ﴿٦٨﴾

[69] "Does it cause you wonder that a word should come to you from your Lord through a man from amidst you to admonish you. Remember the goodness of God for having made you the successors of the people of Noah and increased your number and strengthened you. Be grateful then to God for His favours that haply it may be well with you."

أَوَعَجِبْتُمْ أَن جَآءَكُمْ ذِكْرٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ
عَلَىٰ رَجُلٍ مِّنكُمْ لِيُنذِرَكُمْ ۚ وَٱذْكُرُوٓا۟
إِذْ جَعَلَكُمْ خُلَفَآءَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ قَوْمِ
نُوحٍ وَزَادَكُمْ فِى ٱلْخَلْقِ بَصْۜطَةً ۖ
فَٱذْكُرُوٓا۟ ءَالَآءَ ٱللَّهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾

(*D*) The tribe known as Themoud dwelt in that part of the Arab land which lies between Hedjaz and Syria and extends to the valley of Alqara known also as Alhajar. The dedication of domestic animals to some deity is a very ancient practice. Its vogue in Babylonia and India can be traced back to thousand of years.

The tribe of Themoud was addicted to this practice. The Prophet Saleh, with a view to testing his people, dedicated openly a she-camel not to any of their idols, but to God. The idea was that should they leave the animal unharmed, he may take it as a sign of recognition of his mission. But so deep-seated was their regard for their own idols, that they could not bear this move on the part of the prophet, Saleh. They destroyed the animal.

(*E*) They were told by the prophet not to spread disorder in the land and not to oppress others. But the forward among them disregarded his advice. Only the lowly and the depressed among his people responded to the call of truth issued by him. This is what has always happened. Whenever a message of truth is delivered, pride of power or wealth has always been an obstacle in its way.

[70] They said: "Art thou come to us to make us serve one God only and give up the gods that our fathers were worshipping? Then bring upon us that with which thou threatenest us, if thou be a man of truth."

قَالُوٓا أَجِئْتَنَا لِنَعْبُدَ ٱللَّهَ وَحْدَهُۥ وَنَذَرَ مَا كَانَ يَعْبُدُ ءَابَآؤُنَا ۖ فَأْتِنَا بِمَا تَعِدُنَآ إِن كُنتَ مِنَ ٱلصَّٰدِقِينَ ﴿٧٠﴾

[71] He said: "Wrath and ruin have already lighted on you from your Lord (so much so that you have lost your reason and harm yourselves). Do ye wrangle with me over mere names that you and your fathers have coined for which you have received no sanction from God. Wait and see what follows. I too will wait."

قَالَ قَدْ وَقَعَ عَلَيْكُم مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ رِجْسٌ وَغَضَبٌ ۖ أَتُجَٰدِلُونَنِى فِىٓ أَسْمَآءٍ سَمَّيْتُمُوهَآ أَنتُمْ وَءَابَآؤُكُم مَّا نَزَّلَ ٱللَّهُ بِهَا مِن سُلْطَٰنٍ ۚ فَٱنتَظِرُوٓا إِنِّى مَعَكُم مِّنَ ٱلْمُنتَظِرِينَ ﴿٧١﴾

[72] Then We by Our mercy did deliver him and those who were on his side and We uprooted all those who had denied Our signs, since in truth they were not of the type who would ever believe.

فَأَنجَيْنَٰهُ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُۥ بِرَحْمَةٍ مِّنَّا
وَقَطَعْنَا دَابِرَ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا
وَمَا كَانُوا مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٧٢﴾

SECTION 10

[73] And to the tribe of Themud did We send one of their kinsfolk, namely, Saleh, Said he to them: "O my people! Serve God, ye have no God other than Him. A clear evidence hath now come to you from your Lord; yonder She-camel dedicated to God shall be a deciding factor for you. Leave her to pasture freely on God's earth and cause her no harm, lest a grievous chastisement seize you."

وَإِلَىٰ ثَمُودَ أَخَاهُمْ صَٰلِحًا ۗ قَالَ
يَٰقَوْمِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مَا لَكُم مِّنْ إِلَٰهٍ
غَيْرُهُۥ ۖ قَدْ جَآءَتْكُم بَيِّنَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ ۖ
هَٰذِهِۦ نَاقَةُ اللَّهِ لَكُمْ ءَايَةً ۖ فَذَرُوهَا
تَأْكُلْ فِىٓ أَرْضِ اللَّهِ ۖ وَلَا تَمَسُّوهَا
بِسُوٓءٍ فَيَأْخُذَكُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٧٣﴾

[74] "And remember how God hath made you successors to the tribe of 'Ad' and settled you in the land, so much so that you have built castles in the plains and hewn out homes in the mountains. Bear in mind the favours that you have received from God and spread not disorder in the land by your high-handedness."

وَاذْكُرُوٓا إِذْ جَعَلَكُمْ خُلَفَآءَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ
عَادٍ وَبَوَّأَكُمْ فِى الْأَرْضِ تَتَّخِذُونَ مِن
سُهُولِهَا قُصُورًا وَتَنْحِتُونَ الْجِبَالَ
بُيُوتًا ۖ فَاذْكُرُوٓا ءَالَآءَ اللَّهِ وَلَا تَعْثَوْا
فِى الْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٧٤﴾

[75] In arrogant pride did the chiefs of his people say to the lowly among the believers: "Know ye for certain that Saleh is a messenger of God?" They said: "Truly do we believe in the truth with which he hath been sent."

قَالَ الْمَلَأُ الَّذِينَ اسْتَكْبَرُوا مِن قَوْمِهِۦ
لِلَّذِينَ اسْتُضْعِفُوا لِمَنْ ءَامَنَ مِنْهُمْ
أَتَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّ صَٰلِحًا مُّرْسَلٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِۦ ۚ
قَالُوٓا إِنَّا بِمَآ أُرْسِلَ بِهِۦ مُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٧٥﴾

[76] Then said those people puffed with pride: "As for us, we believe not in what ye believe."

قَالَ الَّذِيْنَ اسْتَكْبَرُوْٓا اِنَّا بِالَّذِيْٓ اٰمَنْتُمْ بِهٖ كٰفِرُوْنَ ﴿٧٦﴾

(*F*) The prophet Lot was a nephew of the Prophet Abraham. He lived at Sodom. The incident referred to below occurred at this place.

In the *Torah*, it is narrated that there came down a shower of fire and sulphur on Sodom and Gomorrah. The *Qur'ān* however states that this shower was one of stones. By putting the two narratives together we may infer that the phenomenon was of the nature of a volcanic eruption.

[77] Then they slaughtered the she-camel and thus set at naught their Lord's commandment; and they said: "O Saleh! Bring upon us what thou threatenest us with, if thou art one of the sent ones."

فَعَقَرُوا النَّاقَةَ وَعَتَوْا عَنْ اَمْرِ رَبِّهِمْ وَقَالُوْا يٰصٰلِحُ ائْتِنَا بِمَا تَعِدُنَآ اِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الْمُرْسَلِيْنَ ﴿٧٧﴾

[78] Thereupon an earthquake seized them unaware and the next morning they were found lying prostrate on their faces in their dwellings.

فَاَخَذَتْهُمُ الرَّجْفَةُ فَاَصْبَحُوْا فِيْ دَارِهِمْ جٰثِمِيْنَ ﴿٧٨﴾

[79] So, he turned away from them saying: "O my people! I did indeed deliver to you the message of my Lord and gave you sincere advice; but you love not faithful advisers."

فَتَوَلّٰى عَنْهُمْ وَقَالَ يٰقَوْمِ لَقَدْ اَبْلَغْتُكُمْ رِسَالَةَ رَبِّيْ وَنَصَحْتُ لَكُمْ وَلٰكِنْ لَّا تُحِبُّوْنَ النّٰصِحِيْنَ ﴿٧٩﴾

[80] And call to mind the occasion when Lot remonstrated with his people: "Do you commit such indecency as never before any one had committed in the world?

وَلُوْطًا اِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهٖٓ اَتَاْتُوْنَ الْفَاحِشَةَ مَا سَبَقَكُمْ بِهَا مِنْ اَحَدٍ مِّنَ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿٨٠﴾

[81] "They go after men lustfully, discarding women. Indeed, you are a people given to abnormalities."

اِنَّكُمْ لَتَاْتُوْنَ الرِّجَالَ شَهْوَةً مِّنْ دُوْنِ النِّسَآءِ بَلْ اَنْتُمْ قَوْمٌ مُّسْرِفُوْنَ ﴿٨١﴾

[82] But their only answer was (as they talked among themselves): "Turn them (Lot and his followers) out of your city, for, they are a people who make a show of purity."

وَمَا كَانَ جَوَابَ قَوْمِهِۦٓ إِلَّآ أَن قَالُوٓا۟ أَخْرِجُوهُم مِّن قَرْيَتِكُمْ ۖ إِنَّهُمْ أُنَاسٌ يَتَطَهَّرُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾

[83] So, We rescued him and his household except his wife; for, she was one of those who lingered.

فَأَنجَيْنَٰهُ وَأَهْلَهُۥٓ إِلَّا ٱمْرَأَتَهُۥ كَانَتْ مِنَ ٱلْغَٰبِرِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾

[84] And we rained upon them a rain (of stones). Then see what the end was of the wicked.

وَأَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهِم مَّطَرًا ۖ فَٱنظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴿٨٤﴾

(*G*) Midian is not the name of any place of habitation. It is the name of a tribe which dwelt in the Sinai peninsula. It was among them that the prophet Shu'aib pursued his mission.

(*H*) The *Qur'ān* does not attribute to the prophet "Shu'aib" the power to work miracles by way of offering proof of his being the bearer of divine message. Still, it makes him proclaim that he was offering to them a clear proof of his mission; and this proof was the very nature of his teaching which pointed to the path of truth and justice. This makes it clear that in the estimation of the *Qur'ān*, the teachings of the prophets should by their very nature furnish the requisite proof of their contention that they were indeed prophets and that it was not necessary for them to perform any miracles.

(*I*) The basic principle which should govern human relations, particularly in business transactions, is that every one should receive what is due to him and that in measuring out anything to each other, one should observe the utmost honesty. It was this principle which the prophets always enjoined on the people around them.

The prophet Shu'aib asked his people at least to bear with him and await the result of what they do. Even this advice was not heeded to by his detractors.

Section 11

[85] And we sent to Midian, their

وَإِلَىٰ مَدْيَنَ أَخَاهُمْ شُعَيْبًا ۗ قَالَ يَٰقَوْمِ

kinsman, Shu'aib, who said to them: "O my people! Serve God; ye have not other God than Him. There has come to you now a clear message from your Lord. Give therefore the full in measure and weight; and defraud not the people of their belongings and do not cause disorder in the land after order has been restored therein. In this there is good for you, if only you believe in it.

اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مَا لَكُم مِّنْ إِلَٰهٍ غَيْرُهُ ۖ قَدْ جَاءَتْكُم بَيِّنَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ ۖ فَأَوْفُوا الْكَيْلَ وَالْمِيزَانَ وَلَا تَبْخَسُوا النَّاسَ أَشْيَاءَهُمْ وَلَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ بَعْدَ إِصْلَاحِهَا ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٨٥﴾

[86] "And lie not in wait by every road to menace him who believeth in God and turn him away from the way of God by letting it appear crooked; and remember that when ye were few, God multiplied you; and see that hath been the end of those who had created disorder (in society)."

وَلَا تَقْعُدُوا بِكُلِّ صِرَاطٍ تُوعِدُونَ وَتَصُدُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ مَنْ آمَنَ بِهِ وَتَبْغُونَهَا عِوَجًا ۚ وَاذْكُرُوا إِذْ كُنتُمْ قَلِيلًا فَكَثَّرَكُمْ ۖ وَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٨٦﴾

PART IX

Chapter VII

AL-'ARĀF (*Contd.*)



CHAPTER VII

AL-'ARĀF (*Contd.*)

(*J*) In Verse 87, the prophet "Shu'aib" is stated to have exclaimed: "God is the 'best of judges' "

The *Qur'ān* elsewhere designates the judgment of God as "Qaza-bil-Haq" and also calls it as "the highest proof". And what is this judgment? It is His announcement of that law of life which lets truth triumph in due course and untruth fail.

(*K*) In verse 88, the *Qur'ān* makes it clear that a religious belief is a matter of personal conviction, and that no one should therefore venture to force any one to conform to his own belief. It also makes it clear that the struggle between the sponsors of truth and those who would not accept it was simply this that while the former contended that they would pursue a path which they sincerely felt was the path of truth, their detractors retorted by saying that they would compel them (the sponsors of truth) to take to their path.

قال الملأ ٩   الأعراف ٧

وَإِن كَانَ طَائِفَةٌ مِّنكُمْ آمَنُوا بِالَّذِي أُرْسِلْتُ بِهِ وَطَائِفَةٌ لَّمْ يُؤْمِنُوا فَاصْبِرُوا حَتَّىٰ يَحْكُمَ اللَّهُ بَيْنَنَا ۚ وَهُوَ خَيْرُ الْحَاكِمِينَ ﴿٨٧﴾ قَالَ الْمَلَأُ الَّذِينَ اسْتَكْبَرُوا مِن قَوْمِهِ لَنُخْرِجَنَّكَ يَا شُعَيْبُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَكَ مِن قَرْيَتِنَا أَوْ لَتَعُودُنَّ فِي مِلَّتِنَا ۚ قَالَ أَوَلَوْ كُنَّا كَارِهِينَ ﴿٨٨﴾

(87) "And if there be some among you who believe in the message with which I have been sent and some others who may not believe in it, then, wait to see how God judges between us; for, He is the best of Judges."

[88] Said the leaders of his people who were puffed with pride: "O Shu'aib! We shall expel thee and those who have believed with thee from our city, or ye all had better return to our faith." Replied he: "Shall we return to your faith even when we abhor it?

(89) "We shall surely be foisting a lie on God if we should return to your faith, once God hath delivered us from it. It is not for us to take to any way we like; we are but to follow what He wills for us. The knowledge of our Lord embraceth all things. In God do we put our trust. O our Lord! Decide fairly between us and our people; for, Thou art the best to decide."

قَدِ افْتَرَيْنَا عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا إِنْ عُدْنَا
فِي مِلَّتِكُم بَعْدَ إِذْ نَجَّانَا اللَّهُ مِنْهَا ۚ
وَمَا يَكُونُ لَنَا أَن نَّعُودَ فِيهَا إِلَّا
أَن يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ رَبُّنَا ۚ وَسِعَ رَبُّنَا كُلَّ
شَيْءٍ عِلْمًا ۚ عَلَى اللَّهِ تَوَكَّلْنَا ۚ رَبَّنَا
افْتَحْ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَ قَوْمِنَا بِالْحَقِّ وَأَنتَ
خَيْرُ الْفَاتِحِينَ ﴿٨٩﴾

(20) (*a*) Ponder on the role of prophets. Every prophet was born among the people for whom he was raised as a prophet. Nowhere was an outsider or a stranger imported to perform the task.

(*b*) None of the prophets was a king or a man of authority. None of the prophets was equipped with material means of strength. Every one depended for the success of his mission entirely on God.

(*c*) The message of all the prophets was but one and the same; and it was that one should show devotion only to God and to none else.

(*d*) All the prophets enjoined on their people righteous living and warned them of the evil result of unrighteous living.

(*e*) In every case, the well-to-do sections of society opposed the prophets sent to them; and it was only the forlorn and the depressed who at first rallied round the prophets.

(*f*) Opposition to the prophets was in every case the same in style. Their message was ridiculed and laughed at and every means was adopted to persecute them and their following.

(*g*) Every prophet proclaimed: "If you cannot straightaway accept the message delivered to you, at least bear with me or tolerate me for a while and await the result of what you do." But their detractors would not agree even to this.

(*h*) It has always been observed that while the preachers of truth went on appealing to the people among whom they

worked and listened to them with patience, their detractors always gave them no rest and resorted to violence against them. The cry of every prophet was: "Ponder on the clear proofs which I furnish you in support of my mission." The cry of the detractors was: "Turn him out of our town or stone him."

(*i*) The result of such behaviour on the part of those who opposed the prophets was always the same. All those who had thwarted the cause of truth had soon or late to perish; and no power on earth could ever rescue them from the operation of this law of life.

It is to the working of this Divine law that the *Qur'ān* draws particular attention in the following verses. Mark that in verse 94, it emphasizes that such has been always the way of God or "Sunnat Allah"; and in verse 101 and those following it cites instances in support of this statement.

[90] The elders among those who did not follow Shu'aib said to their people: "If you follow Shu'aib, you will certainly perish."

وَقَالَ الْمَلَأُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِن قَوْمِهِ لَئِنِ اتَّبَعْتُمْ شُعَيْبًا إِنَّكُمْ إِذًا لَّخَاسِرُونَ ﴿٩٠﴾

[91] Thereafter an earthquake overtook them unaware and in the morning they were found lying prostrate on their faces in their dwellings.

فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ الرَّجْفَةُ فَأَصْبَحُوا فِي دَارِهِمْ جَاثِمِينَ ﴿٩١﴾

[92] Those who had treated Shu'aib as an impostor looked as if they had never dwelt in their homes. They were the ones that had perished.

الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا شُعَيْبًا كَأَن لَّمْ يَغْنَوْا فِيهَا ۚ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا شُعَيْبًا كَانُوا هُمُ الْخَاسِرِينَ ﴿٩٢﴾

[93] So he turned away from them saying: "O my people! I delivered to you in all sincerety the behests of my Lord and gave you good counsel. (But when you deliberately chose the path of disobedience), what will avail, if I grieve for a people who have discarded the right path."

فَتَوَلَّىٰ عَنْهُمْ وَقَالَ يَا قَوْمِ لَقَدْ أَبْلَغْتُكُمْ رِسَالَاتِ رَبِّي وَنَصَحْتُ لَكُمْ ۖ فَكَيْفَ آسَىٰ عَلَىٰ قَوْمٍ كَافِرِينَ ﴿٩٣﴾

SECTION 12

[94] And whenever we sent a prophet to any place, We let the people thereof go through trials and tribulations in order that they might humble themselves (before God).

وَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَا فِي قَرْيَةٍ مِّن نَّبِيٍّ إِلَّآ
أَخَذْنَآ أَهْلَهَا بِالْبَأْسَآءِ وَالضَّرَّآءِ
لَعَلَّهُمْ يَضَّرَّعُونَ ﴿٩٤﴾

[95] Thereafter did we change their condition from one of plight to one of relief. But when in their altered condition of prosperity (they grew insensitive to righteous living) and began to upbraid: "Even our fathers were touched with both joy and sorrow," (as if they made light of the principle of requital in life). Our chastisement overtook them unaware.

ثُمَّ بَدَّلْنَا مَكَانَ السَّيِّئَةِ الْحَسَنَةَ
حَتَّىٰ عَفَوا وَّقَالُوا قَدْ مَسَّ آبَآءَنَا
الضَّرَّآءُ وَالسَّرَّآءُ فَأَخَذْنَاهُم
بَغْتَةً وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٩٥﴾

[96] Had these people believed in God and abstained from evil, we would have opened out for them the doors of the heavens and the earth to afford them our bounties. But they treated Our signs as lies, and We meted out to them what they had worked for (and let them suffer in consequence).

وَلَوْ أَنَّ أَهْلَ الْقُرَىٰٓ آمَنُوا وَاتَّقَوْا
عَلَيْهِم بَرَكَاتٍ مِّنَ السَّمَآءِ وَ
الْأَرْضِ وَلَٰكِن كَذَّبُوا فَأَخَذْنَاهُم بِمَا
كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿٩٦﴾

(21) The retribution which overtook those who had revolted against the Divine message was very often in the form of earthquakes, hurricanes, floods and volcanic showers.

Why were these phenomena styled as "Divine punishments" for wrong living or for going against the truths of life? They were so styled because these sudden natural phenomena occurred soon after the people had been warned by their prophets that they would be visited with calamities for having deliberately pursued a wicked course despite the admonitions of prophets.

This does not suggest that every earthquake should be regarded as a Divine punishment. But every such phenomenon, of which it was prophesied that it would overtake the wrong-doers, was to be taken as a punishment indeed. Every natural phenomenon puts on a form peculiar to it, and so whenever it occurs, its form does not change, only the occasion of its occurrence varies. The fact is that the reality about such occurrences is beyond the mind of man to probe.

(22) Note the meaning of verse 99.

In Arabic "Makr" means secret device or secret contrivance. Reflect over the secrecy with which the contrivances of Nature manifest themselves suddenly.

The forces which bring about what is called an earthquake have been at work for a lengthy period before they stage the phenomenon. Likewise, floods are not the work of a single moment. It takes a long time to assume this form. Similarly, lava boils for years before it burst out in the form of a volcanic eruption.

So many things are at work around us in the sphere of Nature which we do not notice. We hardly realise that we might at any moment be engulfed in a catastrophe. Such is the case of those who live in wickedness and contrive against those who would like them to reform. They hardly realise that the contrivance of God overtakes them unaware by way of retribution for the wickedness they had wrought in life.

[97] Do the dwellers of the towns feel secure when Our chastisement overtakes them by night while they are asleep?

أَفَأَمِنَ أَهْلُ الْقُرَىٰ أَن يَأْتِيَهُم بَأْسُنَا بَيَاتًا وَهُمْ نَائِمُونَ ﴿٩٧﴾

[98] Or will they feel secure when this chastisement lights on them in broad daylight while they are sporting themselves?

أَوَأَمِنَ أَهْلُ الْقُرَىٰ أَن يَأْتِيَهُم بَأْسُنَا ضُحًى وَهُمْ يَلْعَبُونَ ﴿٩٨﴾

[99] Can they disregard the contrivance of God (and feel secure that they would escape it), but remember! Only they behave in this manner who have to perish.

أَفَأَمِنُوا مَكْرَ اللَّهِ ۚ فَلَا يَأْمَنُ مَكْرَ اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْقَوْمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ ﴿٩٩﴾

Section 13

[100] Do they who succeed others to rule over the earth fancy that they will not have to face chastisement for any misdeed of theirs and that in consequence their hearts will be so sealed that they cannot hearken to any good counsel?

اَوَلَمْ يَهْدِ لِلَّذِيْنَ يَرِثُوْنَ
مِنْۢ بَعْدِ اَهْلِهَآ اَنْ لَّوْ نَشَآءُ اَصَبْنٰهُمْ
بِذُنُوْبِهِمْ ۚ وَنَطْبَعُ عَلٰى قُلُوْبِهِمْ
فَهُمْ لَا يَسْمَعُوْنَ ﴿١٠٠﴾

[101] (O Prophet!) We relate to thee here the stories of the cities (that flourished in days gone by). To the people of every one of these places came apostles with clear proofs of their mission, but (despite these proofs) they would not believe in what they had already treated as imposture. Thus it is that God seals up the hearts of those who (wilfully) reject (the apostles).

تِلْكَ الْقُرٰى نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ اَنْۢبَآئِهَا ۚ
وَلَقَدْ جَآءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنٰتِ ۚ
فَمَا كَانُوْا لِيُؤْمِنُوْا بِمَا كَذَّبُوْا مِنْ
قَبْلُ ۗ كَذٰلِكَ يَطْبَعُ اللّٰهُ عَلٰى قُلُوْبِ
الْكٰفِرِيْنَ ﴿١٠١﴾

[102] Most of these people did we find devoid of faith (since they had grown insensitive to the promptings of their very nature ingrained in them), and most of them did We find disobedient (also).

وَمَا وَجَدْنَا لِاَكْثَرِهِمْ مِّنْ عَهْدٍ ۚ
وَاِنْ وَّجَدْنَآ اَكْثَرَهُمْ لَفٰسِقِيْنَ ﴿١٠٢﴾

(23) Now begins a reference to the mission of Moses, and to the fact that even in his case every warning given by him to his people is accompanied by a glad tiding of a better time to follow. The passage below cites what befell the Israelites to serve as an admonition to the followers of the *Qur'ān*.

(*a*) Moses demanded of Pharoah, the King of Egypt, the emancipation of the Israelites from his yoke, and permission to them to return to their homeland. It may be stated that long before Moses, the Israelites had migrated to Egypt in the time of Joseph and honourably settled down therein, but had gra-

dually been forced into slavery; so much so that their condition attracted the serious attention of Moses.

(*b*) It has always happened that whenever a suppressed people attempt to seek freedom, their oppressors have regarded it as a revolt against the State. The only demand of Moses was that the Israelites should be allowed to come out of Egypt. The nobility around Pharaoh took the occasion to impress upon him that Moses really aimed at the expulsion of the Egyptians themselves from Egypt. In fact in the Chapter entitled Yunus (Jonah) Verse 78, it is stated that they even represented to their King that Moses aspired to be the ruler of Egypt himself.

(*c*) The nobility thereupon induced their King to assemble the leading sorcerers of Egypt to overawe Moses. Details of this move are furnished in another Chapter entitled "Taha", verse 58.

[103] Thereafter did We send Moses with Our signs to Pharaoh and his nobles, but they treated them with scorn. So, behold what was the end of the wicked.

ثُمَّ بَعَثْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ مُوسَىٰ بِآيَاتِنَا
إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَئِهِ فَظَلَمُوا بِهَا ۖ
فَانْظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿١٠٣﴾

[104] Said Moses: "O Pharaoh! I am verily an apostle from the Lord of all creation.

وَقَالَ مُوسَىٰ يَا فِرْعَوْنُ إِنِّي رَسُولٌ مِنْ
رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٠٤﴾

[105] "It does not behove me to say anything concerning God save what is nought but truth. I have brought from thy Nourisher clear proofs (of my mission). So (do not force the Israelites any further to live under thy yoke and) allow them to depart with me from here."

حَقِيقٌ عَلَىٰ أَنْ لَا أَقُولَ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِلَّا
الْحَقَّ ۚ قَدْ جِئْتُكُمْ بِبَيِّنَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ
فَأَرْسِلْ مَعِيَ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ ﴿١٠٥﴾

[106] He said: "If thou hast really come with a proof, then, show it out if thou art a man of truth."

قَالَ إِنْ كُنْتَ جِئْتَ بِآيَةٍ فَأْتِ بِهَا
إِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ ﴿١٠٦﴾

[107] Thereupon Moses cast down his staff and (to the surprise of every one), the staff took the form of a veritable python.

فَأَلْقَىٰ عَصَاهُ فَإِذَا هِيَ ثُعْبَانٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٠٧﴾

(*d*) The sorcerers accordingly assembled to thwart Moses. The *Qur'an* states that the sorcerers bewitched the vision of the spectators. By this the *Qur'ān* means to suggest that sorcery had no reality about it and that, on the other hand, it was just a raising up of an illusion. The *Qur'ān* characterises this elsewhere as a reaction to hypnotic suggestions. (Q 66:20). Indeed, in verse 117 of this chapter this is declared as a futile demonstration.

Sorcery or magic is an art of deception and has been practised from ancient times everywhere in the world with no small cause of trouble to mankind. The *Qur'an* had to declare even thirteen hundred years back that there was absolutely no substance in this art. The pity of it is that mankind is still attracted by it. In fact its hold on the mind of man has been so strong in the course of history that in the middle ages Christian obscurantism and fanaticism had to consign to fire countless innocent human beings.

[108] And he drew forth his hand (from his pocket), and to the sight of the beholders, it appeared brilliantly white.

وَنَزَعَ يَدَهُ فَإِذَا هِيَ بَيْضَاءُ لِلنَّاظِرِينَ ﴿١٠٨﴾

SECTION 14

[109] Then the nobles of the court of Pharaoh murmured (amongst themselves): "Verily he is a clever wizard:

قَالَ الْمَلَأُ مِن قَوْمِ فِرْعَوْنَ إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَسَاحِرٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٠٩﴾

[110] "He would (by exercising his powers) drive you out of your land (and himself become the master of it). So what shall we do?"

يُرِيدُ أَن يُخْرِجَكُم مِّنْ أَرْضِكُمْ فَمَاذَا تَأْمُرُونَ ﴿١١٠﴾

[111] (Having counselled among themselves) they said to Pharaoh: "Delay his departure and that of His brother for a while:

قَالُوٓا أَرْجِهْ وَأَخَاهُ وَأَرْسِلْ فِي الْمَدَآئِنِ حٰشِرِينَ ﴿١١١﴾

[112] "(And in the meanwhile) send round men to bring to thee from your cities all skilled magicians."

يَأْتُوكَ بِكُلِّ سٰحِرٍ عَلِيمٍ ﴿١١٢﴾

[113] So, when the magicians came to Pharaoh, they said: "If we overpower Moses, we will require adequate reward."

وَجَآءَ السَّحَرَةُ فِرْعَوْنَ قَالُوٓا إِنَّ لَنَا لَأَجْرًا إِن كُنَّا نَحْنُ الْغٰلِبِينَ ﴿١١٣﴾

[114] "Certainly you will receive a reward," said Pharaoh, "And raise you to the ranks of those who are my companions."

قَالَ نَعَمْ وَإِنَّكُمْ لَمِنَ الْمُقَرَّبِينَ ﴿١١٤﴾

[115] (When the contest began), the magicians said to Moses: "O Moses! will you cast down (your staff) first or shall we cast down (our rods)."

قَالُوا يٰمُوسَىٰٓ إِمَّآ أَن تُلْقِيَ وَإِمَّآ أَن نَّكُونَ نَحْنُ الْمُلْقِينَ ﴿١١٥﴾

[116] Moses said: "Cast ye first (your rods)." And when they cast down (their enchanted rods and ropes), they bewitched the eyes of the people around and frightened them by staging a great feat of enchantment.

قَالَ أَلْقُوا فَلَمَّآ أَلْقَوْا سَحَرُوٓا أَعْيُنَ النَّاسِ وَاسْتَرْهَبُوهُمْ وَجَآءُو بِسِحْرٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿١١٦﴾

[117] It was then that We inspired Moses to cast down his staff, and when it was cast down, it instantly devoured all their false wonders (and thus wiped them out).

وَأَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَىٰ مُوسَىٰٓ أَنْ أَلْقِ عَصَاكَ فَإِذَا هِيَ تَلْقَفُ مَا يَأْفِكُونَ ﴿١١٧﴾

(*e*) The sorcerers set against Moses had to collapse before him and accept his faith. Pharaoh regarded this as an act of treason, deserving of capital punishment.

Chapter *Taha*, verse 59 mentions that this event occurred, even as Moses devised, on a holiday when people could muster strong to witness the demonstration of the sorcerers and the collapse that would overtake them. It may be added here that a little before the sorcerers' demonstration of their strength, they had been pursuaded by Moses to reflect over the folly which they were going to stage, so much so, that they showed signs of a weakening faith in their power. But they had nevertheless to go ahead with their demonstration, since Pharaoh had proclaimed the advent of Moses as a danger to the state.

Realising that before the very eyes of his people, he had been given a heavy blow by Moses, and that the very sorcerers who had been set against him had come to terms with him and accepted his faith, Pharoah necessarily charged the sorcerers with treason and defection and resolved to deal condign punishment to them.

(*f*) Sincere conviction, felt even but for a moment, inspires one with such inward courage that no power on earth can frighten him at the moment or overawe. The very same sorcerers who a little while ago were entreating Pharaoh to bestow favours on them, now that they had embraced the living faith of Moses, grew so regardless of Pharaoh that no threats of torture could dissuade them from their loyalty to their new faith. Details of this development are given in the chapter *Taha* V. 72 already referred to above.

[118] Thus did the truth prevail and all that they (the sorcerers) had wrought came to nought.

فَوَقَعَ الْحَقُّ وَبَطَلَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١١٨﴾

[119] So were they vanquished on the spot and had to draw back humiliated.

فَغُلِبُوا هُنَالِكَ وَانْقَلَبُوا صٰغِرِيْنَ ﴿١١٩﴾

[120] (Impressed by the accomplishment of Moses and the truth he stood for) the magicians fell down prostrate,

وَأُلْقِيَ السَّحَرَةُ سٰجِدِيْنَ ﴿١٢٠﴾

[121] crying out: "We believe in the Lord of all creation—

قَالُوٓا ءَامَنَّا بِرَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٢١﴾

[122] "The Lord of Moses and Aaron."

رَبِّ مُوسَىٰ وَهَٰرُونَ ﴿١٢٢﴾

[123] (Enraged) did Pharaoh say to them: "You have believed on him without my permission. Surely this is a plot which you have planned to drive out from my city the people living therein. But anon you shall see the result of what you have done.

قَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ ءَامَنتُم بِهِۦ قَبْلَ أَنْ ءَاذَنَ لَكُمْ ۖ إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَمَكْرٌ مَّكَرْتُمُوهُ فِى ٱلْمَدِينَةِ لِتُخْرِجُوا مِنْهَآ أَهْلَهَا ۖ فَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٢٣﴾

[124] "I shall certainly cut off the hand of every one of you and the foot opposite to it and then have you all crucified."

لَأُقَطِّعَنَّ أَيْدِيَكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُم مِّنْ خِلَٰفٍ ثُمَّ لَأُصَلِّبَنَّكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿١٢٤﴾

[125] They said: "Be it so. After all we have all (one day) to return to our Lord, (and so, we shall not mind any suffering involved in the process).

قَالُوٓا إِنَّآ إِلَىٰ رَبِّنَا مُنقَلِبُونَ ﴿١٢٥﴾

[126] "Thou art taking vengeance on us simply because we have believed in the signs of our Lord in the form they have come to us. (And we pray to God): "Lord! Grant us constancy in faith (and let no trials of life weaken our faith) and call us back in a state of absolute trust in Thee."

وَمَا تَنقِمُ مِنَّآ إِلَّآ أَنْ ءَامَنَّا بِـَٔايَٰتِ رَبِّنَا لَمَّا جَآءَتْنَا ۚ رَبَّنَآ أَفْرِغْ عَلَيْنَا صَبْرًا وَتَوَفَّنَا مُسْلِمِينَ ﴿١٢٦﴾

Section 15

(*g*) Pharaoh had then to leave Moses to go his own way, but secretly issued orders to his officers to slay the male children of the Israelites in order to prevent further increase in their numbers in Egypt.

In fact Pharaoh had wished to put to death Moses himself but was dissuaded from his purpose by one of his near relations who had in secret embraced the faith of Moses.

(Q. 28:40). His courtiers however argued with him that if left free, Moses would spread disaffection among the people and would openly revile their deities. Pharaoh, however, could not agree with them. He asked them not to be afraid of Moses since his people, the Israelites, were after all absolutely under his control and subjection and dared not promote disorder in the land.

(*h*) It may be pointed out that the Egyptian worshipped idols, the chief of them being the Sun-god called "Ra". Since the King was regarded as an incarnation of this Sun-god, Ra, he was styled as Fara. It is this Fara which in Hebrew was pronounced as Farawa and in Arabic Fir-awn.

(*i*) The first effect of subjection of a race to the domination of another is that the spirit of courageous resolve grows enfeebled and the subject race slowly gets reconciled to their new life and rests content with the peace bred of dependence on others, and feel little urge to enter upon any enterprising activity. This was the position to which the Israelites had been reduced. They had indeed grown so attuned to their state of slavery that they could hardly think of seeking redemption from it. It is curious to note that instead of cheerfully responding to the call of Moses, they developed the mood of complain of him for the advice that he gave them to improve their condition. His primary purpose was to effect their emancipation from the thraldom imposed on them by Pharaoh. But the Israelites could not appreciate his purpose. In fact, they felt embarrassed at his presence in Egypt, since they feared that Pharaoh would exercise greater pressure on them and make their life more miserable.

(*j*) Moses called on them to reflect over and be steadfast in their devotion to God and seek aid from Him alone in their plight. The announcement of the *Qur'ān* is that God lets only those to inherit the earth and rule over it who are staunch in their faith in God and remain devoted to Him even in moments of adversity. It proclaims also that ultimate success is only for those who remain steadfast in their resolve to live righteously in every circumstance.

[127] Then the leaders among the people of Pharaoh said to him: "Will thou let Moses and his people go to create mischief in the land and flout thee and thy gods?"

He said: "We will slay their male children and keep their females alive (that they might serve us as our slaves. We stand in no fear of them). They are after all subject to us and we are masters of them."

وَقَالَ الْمَلَأُ مِنْ قَوْمِ فِرْعَوْنَ أَتَذَرُ
مُوسَىٰ وَقَوْمَهُ لِيُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ
وَيَذَرَكَ وَآلِهَتَكَ ۚ قَالَ سَنُقَتِّلُ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ
فَوْقَهُمْ
قَاهِرُونَ ﴿١٢٧﴾

[128] Then Moses (counselling his people) said to them: "Cry unto God for help and bear up patiently, for the earth is God's earth and He it is who bestows the privilege of governance over it to whomsoever He pleases, and (bear in mind that) success in life eventually lies with those who are mindful of God in all that they do."

قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِ اسْتَعِينُوا بِاللَّهِ
وَاصْبِرُوا ۖ إِنَّ الْأَرْضَ لِلَّهِ يُورِثُهَا
مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ ۖ وَالْعَاقِبَةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١٢٨﴾

[129] They said to him: "We were being oppressed even before you came to us and are being oppressed even now (since thou hast been with us). Said Moses to them: "It looks as if your Lord will shortly destroy your enemy and give you the opportunity to rule over the land in his place, waiting, however, to see how you will acquit yourselves in your new rule."

قَالُوا أُوذِينَا مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَأْتِيَنَا وَمِنْ
بَعْدِ مَا جِئْتَنَا ۚ قَالَ عَسَىٰ رَبُّكُمْ أَنْ
يُهْلِكَ عَدُوَّكُمْ وَيَسْتَخْلِفَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ
فَيَنْظُرَ كَيْفَ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٢٩﴾ ع

SECTION 16

[130] Surely, We had already chastised the people of Pharaoh with

وَلَقَدْ أَخَذْنَا آلَ فِرْعَوْنَ بِالسِّنِينَ وَ

years of famine and scarcity of fruit that happily they might make amends for their evil past.

نَقْصٍ مِّنَ الثَّمَرٰتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَذَّكَّرُوْنَ ﴿١٣٠﴾

[131] And whenever good came to them, they said: "Certainly this is our due." And whenever anything untoward befell them, due to the evil atmosphere around them, they ascribed it to the evil influence of Moses and his partisans. But mark that the evil atmosphere was itself a thing of Divine creation (being a reaction to their own past misdeeds). But of this law of life, few are aware.

فَإِذَا جَآءَتْهُمُ الْحَسَنَةُ قَالُوْا لَنَا هٰذِهٖ
وَإِنْ تُصِبْهُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ يَّطَّيَّرُوْا بِمُوْسٰى
وَمَنْ مَّعَهٗ ۗ أَلَآ إِنَّمَا طٰٓئِرُهُمْ عِنْدَ
اللّٰهِ وَلٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿١٣١﴾

[132] And the people of Pharaoh said to Moses: "Whatever you may do to enchant us, we will not believe in thee."

وَقَالُوْا مَهْمَا تَأْتِنَا بِهٖ مِنْ اٰيَةٍ لِّتَسْحَرَنَا
بِهَا ۙ فَمَا نَحْنُ لَكَ بِمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿١٣٢﴾

(24) In the following passage reference is made to the distresses which overtook the adherents of Pharaoh due to their arrogance and to their proposal to Moses to come to terms with him. (Vide Exodus:20).

[133] And we sent upon them flood, locusts, vermin, frogs, and blood-clear signs of warning to them (in succession); but they persisted in their arrogance since they were a sinful people.

فَأَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمُ الطُّوْفَانَ وَالْجَرَادَ وَ
الْقُمَّلَ وَالضَّفَادِعَ وَالدَّمَ اٰيٰتٍ مُّفَصَّلٰتٍ
فَاسْتَكْبَرُوْا وَكَانُوْا قَوْمًا مُّجْرِمِيْنَ ﴿١٣٣﴾

[134] And whenever any of these mishaps befell them, they said to Moses: "O Moses! pray for us to thy Lord with whom (you say) you have covenanted. If you should take off this distress from us,

وَلَمَّا وَقَعَ عَلَيْهِمُ الرِّجْزُ قَالُوْا يٰمُوْسَى
ادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ بِمَا عَهِدَ عِنْدَكَ ۚ لَئِنْ
كَشَفْتَ عَنَّا الرِّجْزَ لَنُؤْمِنَنَّ لَكَ وَ

we will surely believe in you and let the Israelites go with you."



Every evil takes its own term to produce its inevitable reaction and this is emphasised in verse 135. The result of Pharaoh's misdeed had only to manifest itself and this took the form of total engulfment in the sea of Pharaoh along with his army.

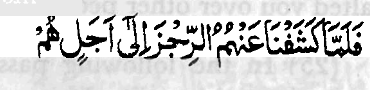
The culmination of evil taking this form is its inevitable reaction is styled by the *Qur'ān* as "Ajal". The term when applied to the life of nations denotes the marking of the time when the eventual result of their living discloses itself in a definite form. This principle of life has already been endorsed in verse 34.

The result is good or evil according to the way each nation has lived its national life. The law of life always asserts itself to invest the oppressed with the resolve and the moral strength to release themselves from the yoke of their oppressors and even to take over in their place the reins of government to their own hands.

The condition of eventual success as mentioned in verse 137 lies with those who are steadfast in the pursuit of righteousness. Had the Israelites faltered at any time in their resolve to pursue their path righteously, they would not have achieved success in their struggle for freedom.

But once they attained their freedom, they seemed to resile into intellectual and spiritual sloth. While in Egypt, they had been dazzled by the glamour of Egyptian idolatry, so much so that when they in their state of freedom beheld the life around the temple of Sinai, they suggested to Moses that something similar to it might be afforded to them by him. This relapse on their part immensely saddened Moses.

[135] But whenever We gave them respite for a term to make amends, in order to avoid the inevitable doom which their line of life would have normally led them to,



they never profited by the respites given them and always broke their promises.

بِالِغُوهُ اِذَا هُمْ يَنْكُثُوْنَ ﴿١٣٥﴾

[136] Ultimately We punished them by drowning them in the sea for having repeatedly disregarding Our warnings.

فَانْتَقَمْنَا مِنْهُمْ فَاَغْرَقْنٰهُمْ فِى الْيَمِّ بِاَنَّهُمْ كَذَّبُوْا بِاٰيٰتِنَا وَكَانُوْا عَنْهَا غٰفِلِيْنَ ﴿١٣٦﴾

[137] And We gave to those whom they had despised the privilege of governance over the Eastern and Western portions of the country, so rich in natural resources, and thus fulfilled Our word given to the Israelites because they had borne up every trial with patience, and We destroyed the edifices which Pharaoh and his people had raised up and the structures which they were putting up.

وَاَوْرَثْنَا الْقَوْمَ الَّذِيْنَ كَانُوْا يُسْتَضْعَفُوْنَ مَشَارِقَ الْاَرْضِ وَمَغَارِبَهَا الَّتِىْ بٰرَكْنَا فِيْهَا ؕ وَتَمَّتْ كَلِمَتُ رَبِّكَ الْحُسْنٰى عَلٰى بَنِىْۤ اِسْرَآءِيْلَ ۙ۬ بِمَا صَبَرُوْا ؕ وَدَمَّرْنَا مَا كَانَ يَصْنَعُ فِرْعَوْنُ وَقَوْمُهٗ وَمَا كَانُوْا يَعْرِشُوْنَ ﴿١٣٧﴾

[138] And we brought the children of Israel across the sea to a place where people were addicted to idolatry. They said to Moses: "Moses! set up for us a God even as they have their own gods." Moses replied (to them in sorrow): "Verily you are an ignorant people;

وَجٰوَزْنَا بِبَنِىْۤ اِسْرَآءِيْلَ الْبَحْرَ فَاَتَوْا عَلٰى قَوْمٍ يَّعْكُفُوْنَ عَلٰۤى اَصْنَامٍ لَّهُمْ ۚ قَالُوْا يٰمُوْسَى اجْعَلْ لَّنَاۤ اِلٰهًا كَمَا لَهُمْ اٰلِهَةٌ ؕ قَالَ اِنَّكُمْ قَوْمٌ تَجْهَلُوْنَ ﴿١٣٨﴾

[139] "For, the way of life these people are pursuing will assuredly lead to ruin, since it is clearly a vain pursuit."

اِنَّ هٰۤؤُلَآءِ مُتَبَّرٌ مَّا هُمْ فِيْهِ وَبٰطِلٌ مَّا كَانُوْا يَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿١٣٩﴾

[140] He said: "Shall I seek for you a God other than He who has exalted you over other people."

قَالَ اَغَيْرَ اللّٰهِ اَبْغِيْكُمْ اِلٰهًا وَّهُوَ فَضَّلَكُمْ عَلَى الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿١٤٠﴾

(25) In the following passage an account is given of what transpired between Moses and his people on their return from Egypt. It has already been pointed out that aggressive

people, despite their strong opposition to the call of truth, have had eventually to fail in their attempt to suppress it. It is now pointed out that even the party that had stood for truth has had to fall into pitfalls in their hour of relief from oppression. This fact of history is brought home here to caution those who struggle in the cause of truth.

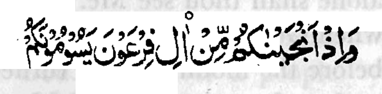
The *Qur'ān* refers to the admonition given to the Israelites at a stage in their history when they had to begin a new life in their homeland after their release from the grip of Pharaoh.

(*a*) An account of this phase of the life of the Israelites begins with a reference to the retirement of Moses to the mount of Sinai (Tur) and his formulation there of his commandments to the Israelites (vide also Exodus 34:39).

(*b*) The *Qur'ān* here points to a verity of life that man cannot comprehend God through his senses or even his intellect, and that the only honest way left to him is to acknowledge with perfect frankness his absolute inability to do so.

The Israelites had fallen into a fundamental error when they took the figurative imagery of *Torah* in the literal sense and fancied that Moses had beheld in reality the very countenance of God. The *Qur'ān* here takes the occasion to correct this mistaken view. The *Qur'ān* states that when God called out to Moses from behind the veil of existence, Moses desired God to appear before him. When Moses heard from behind the veil the very voice of God, he grew so ecstatic in his desire to behold Him, that the desire to behold God overpowered him and he cried out: "O God let me behold the beatitude of Thy countenance." God asked him to look at the mountain and added that if the mountain should bear the sight of His countenance, it would then be possible for him to behold the Divine countenance. He meant to convey to Moses that it was the inherent incapacity of man that prevented him from beholding the countenance of God.

[141] And (God said to the Israelites): "Call to mind the time when We rescued you from



the people of Pharaoh who had imposed on you cruel hardships and who had slain your male children and let only your female children live—events which marked a great trial for you from your Lord.

سُوٓءَ الْعَذَابِ ۚ يُقَتِّلُونَ أَبْنَآءَكُمْ وَ
يَسْتَحْيُونَ نِسَآءَكُمْ ۚ وَفِى ذٰلِكُم بَلَآءٌ
مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٤١﴾

SECTION 1

[142] And We had permitted Moses to commune with Us for a period of thirty nights and We extended it by further ten nights so that his communion with his Lord amounted to forty nights.

And Moses then said to his brother Aaron: (while retiring for communion): "Take thou my place among my people and act uprightly, and follow not the way of the corrupt."

وَوٰعَدْنَا مُوسٰى ثَلٰثِينَ لَيْلَةً وَّأَتْمَمْنٰهَا
بِعَشْرٍ فَتَمَّ مِيقٰتُ رَبِّهٖٓ أَرْبَعِينَ لَيْلَةً ۚ
وَقَالَ مُوسٰى لِأَخِيهِ هٰرُونَ اخْلُفْنِى
فِى قَوْمِى وَأَصْلِحْ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ سَبِيلَ
الْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿١٤٢﴾

[143] And Moses repaired (for communion) at the appointed time and his Lord conversed with him. He (in a state of ecstacy) cried out! "O Lord! Show me Thy countenance that I may behold it." He said: "Thou shall not see Me, but look towards the mountain and if that (could bear the effulgence of My countenance and) could stand firm in its place, then alone shall thou see Me." And when God disclosed His glory before the mountain, He turned to dust the mountain and Moses

وَلَمَّا جَآءَ مُوسٰى لِمِيقٰتِنَا وَكَلَّمَهٗ
رَبُّهٗ ۙ قَالَ رَبِّ أَرِنِىٓ أَنظُرْ إِلَيْكَ ۚ
قَالَ لَن تَرٰنِى وَلٰكِنِ انظُرْ إِلَى الْجَبَلِ
فَإِنِ اسْتَقَرَّ مَكَانَهٗ فَسَوْفَ
تَرٰنِى ۚ فَلَمَّا تَجَلّٰى رَبُّهٗ لِلْجَبَلِ جَعَلَهٗ

دَكًّا وَّخَرَّ مُوسٰى صَعِقًا ۚ فَلَمَّآ اَفَاقَ قَالَ سُبْحٰنَكَ تُبْتُ اِلَيْكَ وَاَنَا اَوَّلُ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿١٤٣﴾

قَالَ يٰمُوْسٰٓى اِنِّى اصْطَفَيْتُكَ عَلَى النَّاسِ بِرِسٰلٰتِىْ وَبِكَلَامِىْ ۖ فَخُذْ مَآ اٰتَيْتُكَ وَكُنْ مِّنَ الشّٰكِرِيْنَ ﴿١٤٤﴾

fell down swooning. And when Moses came to himself he exclaimed: "Glory be to Thee. Earnestly do I turn to Thee in permitance, and I am the foremost among those who have faith in Thee."

[144] He said: "O Moses! By allowing thee the privilege of conversing with Me and by entrusting to thee My commission, (I have made it clear to thee that) I have preferred thee above other men. Hold, therefore, to what I have given thee and be of those who are thankful to Me."

(c) Verse 145 declares that whatever was essential for the guidance of the Israelites had been summed up in the commandments which Moses was made to formulate for them. The *Qur'ān* uses the term "Tafsil" for what was intended to be conveyed through the commandments. In the Quranic Phraseology, this term does not convey the same sense that it ordinarily does, namely, of details in contradistinction with the totality of anything. It is the failure to grasp the significance of this Quranic term which is responsible for the elaborate vivisection attempted by Imam Razi of the opening chapter of the *Qur'ān*.

Since these commandments bore the impress of revelation, God attributed the inscribing of the commandments on the tablets to Himself. This is invariably the manner of expression adopted in relation to the scriptures delivered through the prophets. The *Torah* states that there were only two tablets on each side of which were the commandments inscribed (Exodus 32:14).

(*d*) The *Qur'ān* ascribes the results which flow from human actions to a definite law fixed by God. Whenever a people persist in error and grow so hardened therein that no amount

of argument or remonstrance avails the Quranic way of expressing this development is: "We have sealed their hearts." Those so obsessed with their errors hardly realise that their mental state thus developed by them is nothing but a result of what they themselves have wrought. Such is the operation of the law of life at work in life. Verse 146 states that whenever a people deliberately disrespect the laws of life and decline to yield to reason, the Quranic way of expressing such a development is to say that God has withdrawn His signs from before them, in other words, they have lost the talent to profit by reason and experience and necessarily have to suffer in consequence. It is therefore clear, points out the *Qur'ān*, that those who discard wilfully the way of truth inevitably meet with failure in life. The original phrase "turning them away from the truth" means nothing else than that the law of life is so devised that an evil deed produces an evil result. It does not mean that God leads one into error and inflicts suffering in consequence.

(*e*) The reality of the result flowing from an action is clearly brought out at the end of verse 147: "What else have they earned except what they have worked for."

(*f*) The Israelites had grown so enamoured of the glamour of idolatry prevalent among the Egyptians that no sooner than Moses had gone into retirement for forty days, the Israelites rushed to set up a calf of gold and began to worship it. It is stated in *Torah* that this image had been fashioned by Aaron (Exodus 31:32). The *Qur'ān* however takes a different view of it. It points out that a prophet of God like Aaron could never have thought of such a deed and categorically asserts that this image of gold was devised by a person by name Samari (Q. 20:90).

The way of those who are dazzled by the supernatural is to go blindly after it, discarding reason and the promptings of common sense. Samari knew the art of image-making practised in Egypt. The images there were so carved that air could penetrate into the hollow of their bodies, so much so that whenever the wind blew into them, strange sounds

emerged out of them, even as in the dolls produced now-a-days and put on sale in the market. The issuing of sounds from the idols was bolstered up by the temple priests as a miracle wrought by the idols. Such was the device provided by Samari in the golden calf. That was enough to induce the Israelites to offer devotion to it. The Israelites never ventured to ask themselves why it was that one and the same sound came out of the idol and why it never answered any question put to it.

Even in India, the cow had become an object of worship as in Babylon and Egypt. If the Chaldean civilisation is regarded as the most ancient, it may be inferred that the worship of the cow prevalent there was copied elsewhere.

[145] And We had entered on the tablets given to him instructions (touching everything of importance to him) in order that he might grasp aright the significance of everything. So (We asked him): "Hold fast to them and ask the people to follow implicitly these excellent commands issued (for their guidance) so that it should soon become manifest where stand those who disregard them."

وَكَتَبْنَا لَهُ فِي الْأَلْوَاحِ مِن كُلِّ شَيْءٍ
مَّوْعِظَةً وَتَفْصِيلًا لِّكُلِّ شَيْءٍ
فَخُذْهَا بِقُوَّةٍ وَأْمُرْ قَوْمَكَ يَأْخُذُوا
بِأَحْسَنِهَا ۚ سَأُرِيكُمْ دَارَ الْفَاسِقِينَ ﴿١٤٥﴾

[146] Those who walk arrogantly on earth will I turn aside from My signs, for, even if they should see our signs, they will not believe them; (so obsessed to their arrogance are they that even if they see the path of uprightness, they will not take to it). On the other hand whenever they see a path of error they readily follow it; and all this they do, because, they have denied Our signs and have been heedless of them.

سَأَصْرِفُ عَنْ آيَاتِيَ الَّذِينَ يَتَكَبَّرُونَ
فِي الْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ وَإِن يَرَوْا
كُلَّ آيَةٍ لَّا يُؤْمِنُوا بِهَا وَإِن يَرَوْا
سَبِيلَ الرُّشْدِ لَا يَتَّخِذُوهُ سَبِيلًا وَإِن
يَرَوْا سَبِيلَ الْغَيِّ يَتَّخِذُوهُ سَبِيلًا ۚ ذَٰلِكَ
بِأَنَّهُمْ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا وَكَانُوا عَنْهَا غَافِلِينَ ﴿١٤٦﴾

[147] Fruitless will be the works of those who deny Our signs

وَالَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا وَلِقَاءِ الْآخِرَةِ

and belittle the idea of the life to come. Will they earn anything except what they have worked for in life?

حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ ۚ هَلْ يُجْزَوْنَ إِلَّا مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٤٧﴾

Section 18

[148] And while Moses was away, (on the mountain), his people made out of their ornaments the image of a calf so contrived that it could seem to low. (It is a pity that) they had not the sense to realise that it could neither speak to them nor offer them any guidance, and yet they looked upon it (as god) and thus offended their own sense of understanding.

وَاتَّخَذَ قَوْمُ مُوسَىٰ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ مِنْ حُلِيِّهِمْ عِجْلًا جَسَدًا لَهُ خُوَارٌ ۚ أَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّهُ لَا يُكَلِّمُهُمْ وَلَا يَهْدِيهِمْ سَبِيلًا ۘ اتَّخَذُوهُ وَكَانُوا ظَالِمِينَ ﴿١٤٨﴾

[149] And when they realised their error and repented, they cried out: "If our Lord have not mercy on us and forgive us, surely we shall perish."

وَلَمَّا سُقِطَ فِي أَيْدِيهِمْ وَرَأَوْا أَنَّهُمْ قَدْ ضَلُّوا قَالُوا لَئِنْ لَمْ يَرْحَمْنَا رَبُّنَا وَيَغْفِرْ لَنَا لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ﴿١٤٩﴾

[150] And when Moses returned to his people, he said: "How wrongfully you have acted after I had left you. Do you court a speedy doom from your Lord?" In disgust he threw down the tablets (of the commandments given) and seized his brother by the tuft of his head and pulled him towards himself. Said his brother to him: "Son of my mother! Your people regarded me as of no consequence, and had even contrived to slay me. Pray! Do not make mine enemies rejoice over my disgrace and do not count me among evil-doers."

وَلَمَّا رَجَعَ مُوسَىٰ إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ غَضْبَانَ أَسِفًا قَالَ بِئْسَمَا خَلَفْتُمُونِي مِنْ بَعْدِي ۖ أَعَجِلْتُمْ أَمْرَ رَبِّكُمْ ۖ وَأَلْقَى الْأَلْوَاحَ وَأَخَذَ بِرَأْسِ أَخِيهِ يَجُرُّهُ إِلَيْهِ ۚ قَالَ ابْنَ أُمَّ إِنَّ الْقَوْمَ اسْتَضْعَفُونِي وَكَادُوا يَقْتُلُونَنِي فَلَا تُشْمِتْ بِيَ الْأَعْدَاءَ وَلَا تَجْعَلْنِي مَعَ الْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿١٥٠﴾

[151] Moses Prayed: "Lord! Forgive me (for having betrayed excitement) and forgive my brother (for having failed to exercise effective control over the wayward), and cover us with Thy mercy. And who is there who can show the mercy that Thou alone can'st show."

قَالَ رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي وَلِأَخِي وَأَدْخِلْنَا فِي رَحْمَتِكَ ۖ وَأَنتَ أَرْحَمُ الرَّاحِمِينَ ﴿١٥١﴾ ع

SECTION 19

[152] The displeasure of their Lord will surely rest on those who had worshipped the calf, and humiliation will be their share in their present life; for, so do We requite those who give rise to false notions.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا الْعِجْلَ سَيَنَالُهُمْ غَضَبٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَذِلَّةٌ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا ۚ وَكَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُفْتَرِينَ ﴿١٥٢﴾

[153] But to those who having done evil repent earnestly and thereafter return to their trust in God, thy Lord will without doubt forgive mercifully.

وَالَّذِينَ عَمِلُوا السَّيِّئَاتِ ثُمَّ تَابُوا مِن بَعْدِهَا وَآمَنُوا إِنَّ رَبَّكَ مِن بَعْدِهَا لَغَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٥٣﴾

(*g*) The *Qur'ān* now refers to the catastrophe which overtook the leaders of the Israelites, seventy in number, who were openly opposed to the mission of Moses.

This incident is also referred to in the *Torah* when it is stated that those who had worked against Moses perished in an earthquake (Numbers 16:31).

(*h*) In verse 165 the *Qur'ān* emphasises that the governing principle at work in the life of the Universe and in every aspect of it is the principle of what is styled as *Rahmat* or Divine graciousness or mercy, and not of a retributive justice or chastisement. In special situations no doubt this very principle of graciousness has to take the form of chastisement. Applied to human life, such a chastisement is always resorted to in the abiding interest of humanity as a whole, the underlying spirit always being one of graciousness or mercy.

This is one of the fundamentals on which the ideology of the *Qur'ān* stands. It sets at rest every speculation raised in regard to the attributes of God and their manifestation in action. Indeed as already pointed out in Chapter 6 entitled "Anaam", the *Qur'ān* declares that God hath imposed on Himself the exercise of graciousness or Mercy as His primary function. It is this attribute that permeats every other attribute of God or functions through and through every other attribute and gives to it the touch of graciousness. It is why what may seem as chastisement is in reality an aspect of divine graciousness or its expression.

(*i*) In verse 156, the *Qur'ān* makes it absolutely clear that those who repose faith in whatever has been revealed now or before will be entitled to profit by the graciousness of God. Since this truth has now been fully disclosed through the *Qur'ān*, it behoves the followers of earlier revealed scriptures to hearten themselves and pursue the divine directions given them and achieve success in life.

(*j*) The *Qur'ān* here points out that the message of truth entrusted to the Prophet displays three clear features as fundamental to it.

(1) One is this that the message enjoins what is good and forbids what is evil.

(2) It permits the use of what is admittedly clean and useful to the life of man and prohibits what is unclean or injurious to it.

(3) It redeems man from all fanciful restrictions which the followers of earlier scriptures had imposed upon themselves through a wrong approach to the revealed word—restrictions such as rigours of religious ritual, oppressive religious impositions, beliefs repugnant to reason, superstitions, slavish dependence on professional priests, and abject adulation of religious leaders who had captured the mind and imagination of the Jews and the Christians. The message of the Prophet aimed at the emancipation of the human mind from all such self-

imposed and meaningless restrictions. It pointed to a path of truth easily intelligible to the mind of man and by no means difficult to pursue.

(Alas! the very weaknesses noticed here in the life of the Jews and the Christians in the time of the Prophet have become characteristics of the Muslims themselves of the present day.)

[154] And when the anger of Moses subsided, he took up the tablets; and what was inscribed thereon was but guidance and mercy for those who feared their Lord.

وَلَمَّا سَكَتَ عَن مُّوسَى الْغَضَبُ أَخَذَ
الْأَلْوَاحَ ۖ وَفِي نُسْخَتِهَا هُدًى وَرَحْمَةٌ
لِّلَّذِينَ هُمْ لِرَبِّهِمْ يَرْهَبُونَ ﴿١٥٤﴾

[155] And Moses chose seventy men from among his people to meet together at a time fixed by Us; and when an earthquake shook them, Moses said: "Lord! were it Thy pleasure, thou wouldst have destroyed them and me ere this! (But graciously however didst Thou give us respite.) Wilt Thou now destroy us for what a few foolish persons among us have done. This is nothing but an ordeal imposed (on us) by Thee that Thou mayst let those (who may so choose) go astray and let those (who may so choose) go aright. Thou! Thou art our Guardian. Forgive us and and have mercy on us, for, Thou art the best of forgivers.

وَاخْتَارَ مُوسَىٰ قَوْمَهُ سَبْعِينَ رَجُلًا
لِّمِيقَاتِنَا ۖ فَلَمَّا أَخَذَتْهُمُ الرَّجْفَةُ قَالَ
رَبِّ لَوْ شِئْتَ أَهْلَكْتَهُم مِّن قَبْلُ
وَإِيَّايَ ۖ أَتُهْلِكُنَا بِمَا فَعَلَ السُّفَهَاءُ
مِنَّا ۖ إِنْ هِيَ إِلَّا فِتْنَتُكَ تُضِلُّ بِهَا
مَن تَشَاءُ وَتَهْدِي مَن تَشَاءُ ۖ أَنتَ
وَلِيُّنَا فَاغْفِرْ لَنَا وَارْحَمْنَا ۖ وَأَنتَ
خَيْرُ الْغَافِرِينَ ﴿١٥٥﴾

[156] "And write down for us what is good in this world as well as what is good in the world to come; for, we have now returned to Thee." He said: "The way of My

وَاكْتُبْ لَنَا فِي هَٰذِهِ الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً
وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ إِنَّا هُدْنَا إِلَيْكَ ۚ قَالَ
عَذَابِي أُصِيبُ بِهِ مَنْ أَشَاءُ ۖ وَرَحْمَتِي

is this that it falleth on those whom I will; but My mercy embraceth all things, and I write down what is good for those who shall avoid evil and pay the poor-due and believe in Our signs.

وَسِعَتْ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ ۚ فَسَأَكْتُبُهَا لِلَّذِينَ يَتَّقُونَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكٰوةَ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ بِآيٰتِنَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٥٦﴾

[157] Who shall follow the Apostle, the "Ummi" Prophet whose advent is foretold in the *Torah* and the *Evangel*? He will enjoin them what is right and forbid them what is wrong and permit them to make use of healthful viands and prohibit the impure, and will ease them of the burden under which they groan and free them from the bonds which bind them. And those who shall believe in him and strengthen him against his opponents and help him (in his mission), and follow the light which hath been sent down with him—these are they with whom it shall be well

الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ الرَّسُولَ النَّبِيَّ الْأُمِّيَّ الَّذِي يَجِدُونَهُ مَكْتُوبًا عِنْدَهُمْ فِي التَّوْرٰىةِ وَالْإِنْجِيلِ يَأْمُرُهُمْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهٰهُمْ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُحِلُّ لَهُمُ الطَّيِّبٰتِ وَيُحَرِّمُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْخَبٰٓئِثَ وَيَضَعُ عَنْهُمْ إِصْرَهُمْ وَالْأَغْلٰلَ الَّتِي كَانَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ فَالَّذِينَ اٰمَنُوا بِهِ وَعَزَّرُوهُ وَنَصَرُوهُ وَاتَّبَعُوا النُّورَ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ مَعَهُ ۙ أُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٥٧﴾ ع ١٩

Section 20

(*k*) Verse 158 makes an important announcement to the effect

(1) that the message of the *Qur'ān* is not meant for any particular race or people or section of humanity but for mankind as a whole,

(2) that it aims to see that every human being consciously turns in devotion to God alone, the supreme source of our being, and

(3) that therefore it behoves man to put implicit faith in God and the directions that He has given for the guidance of man.

The *Qur'ān* then asks the Prophet to declare that he hath been raised up as a prophet to announce to mankind at large that the entire universe and everything therein is under the supreme control of God alone. From this it follows that His message or direction to mankind should necessarily be one and the same at all times and meant for one and all.

(*l*) In this verse, the prophet is styled as "Ummi". The term means one who has had no previous acquaintance with the art of reading and writing or with any kind of learning. The term is applied to the Arabs in general of the Prophet's time because they were not a people given to learning.

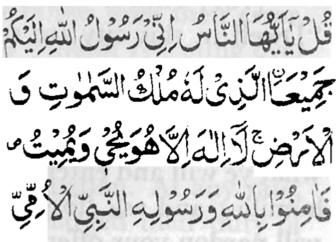
The Prophet is styled "Al-Ummi" for the reason that he too like others had had no occasion to undergo any formal course of education. Whatever he possessed in the form of knowledge was what he received through the divine Revelation delivered to him.

(*m*) Attention is drawn to this fact of the life of the Prophet because it fits into the picture of the Prophet looked forward to by the *Torah* (Vide 18:17 and 22 & 23: 2 and Pslams 45:1 and the *Evengel*, Matthew 20:1 and John 1:21 and 14:15).

(*n*) The *Qur'ān* now refers to the division of the Israelites into twelve tribes and the subsequent happenings in the valley of Sinai.

(*o*) The Israelites on their successful return to their homeland fell into sloth and error instead of developing the mood of thankful devotion to God for the security which was vouchsafed to them (vide also Chapter 2 Al-Baqarah. V. 54 to 56).

[158] (O Prophet!) Say: "O mankind! Verily I am an Apostle of God sent to all of you—the apostle of Him Whose is the Kingdom of the heavens and the earth! (Make it clear to yourselves that) there is none worthy of worship except He. He giveth life and causeth death.



Therefore believe in Him and His Apostle, the "Ummi" Prophet who believeth in God and His word (the Scriptures), and follow him that ye may be guided aright.

الَّذِي يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَكَلِمَاتِهِ وَاتَّبِعُوهُ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٥٨﴾

[159] And among the people of Moses there is certainly a group of men who guide others along the path of truth and deal justice in accordance therewith.

وَمِن قَوْمِ مُوسَىٰ أُمَّةٌ يَهْدُونَ بِالْحَقِّ
وَبِهِ يَعْدِلُونَ ﴿١٥٩﴾

[160] And We divided them (the Israelites) into twelve tribes to form distinct communities and when they all asked Moses to provide them with water, We inspired Moses to strike a particular rock with his staff. And there gushed forth from it twelve springs and every one of the tribes assigned to itself one of these. And We caused clouds to overshadow them, and for their food sent down upon them "manna" and "salva", (saying) Eat of the good things with which We have supplied you and do not quarrel among yourselves or create trouble for each other. But (they went against Our advice and thereby) it was not Us whom they injured. On the other hand, they injured themselves

وَقَطَّعْنَاهُمُ اثْنَتَيْ عَشْرَةَ أَسْبَاطًا أُمَمًا
وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ مُوسَىٰ إِذِ اسْتَسْقَاهُ قَوْمُهُ
أَنِ اضْرِب بِّعَصَاكَ الْحَجَرَ فَانبَجَسَتْ
مِنْهُ اثْنَتَا عَشْرَةَ عَيْنًا قَدْ عَلِمَ كُلُّ
أُنَاسٍ مَّشْرَبَهُمْ وَظَلَّلْنَا عَلَيْهِمُ الْغَمَامَ
وَأَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَنَّ وَالسَّلْوَىٰ كُلُوا
مِن طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ وَمَا ظَلَمُونَا
وَلَٰكِن كَانُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ ﴿١٦٠﴾

[161] And it was said to them "Dwell in this city (to conquer which He had pursuaded you, the area around which is rich in resources) and eat from what is provided therein what ye will and enter its gate in humility and ask 'forgiveness': we will pardon your offences, and give

وَإِذْ قِيلَ لَهُمُ اسْكُنُوا هَٰذِهِ الْقَرْيَةَ
وَكُلُوا مِنْهَا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمْ وَقُولُوا حِطَّةٌ
وَادْخُلُوا الْبَابَ سُجَّدًا نَّغْفِرْ لَكُمْ

to those who do good increasing prosperity.

خَطِيٓـَٔـٰتِكُمْ ۚ سَنَزِيدُ ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٦١﴾

[162] But the evil-minded among them changed the word of "forgiveness" and substituted for it another (meaning something contrary to it). We therefore sent down upon them chastisement for the wrong that they were doing.

فَبَدَّلَ ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا۟ مِنْهُمْ قَوْلًا غَيْرَ ٱلَّذِى قِيلَ لَهُمْ فَأَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ رِجْزًا مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَظْلِمُونَ ﴿١٦٢﴾

(*p*) The Israelites persisted in their error and began to countermand the divine commandments by resorting to fanciful disquisitions about them. For instance, they had been asked not to take to hunting on the sacred day of Sabbath. A group of them countermanded the injunction by digging pits by the sea-shore to let in tidal water, with the result that when the tide receded into the sea, a good many fishes were left in the pits. They made use of them freely; but they applied the unction to their souls by saying that they had not angled for them.

The behaviour of a group of the Israelites was certainly not pleasing to God. As every deed has its own reaction, they were condemned to a life of degradation. "Be ye apes" is the term used to denote this condemnation. This does not mean that they were turned into apes as the renowned commentator Ibn Kasir explains: the term means that they were condemned to a state of mental perversity.

(*q*) It may be observed that however perverse the recalcitrance of the erring folk, those inspired by the spirit of reform should not relax their resolve to rescue others from their error. This is indeed a duty to be discharged without reflecting over the consequences to follow. And then who can say a well-meant effort will not produce a good result? It is possible that the appeal for reform may touch the heart of at least a few of those concerned and they return to God in contrition. At any rate, they will be satisfied that they have discharged their duty of admonishing the erring folk.

SECTION 21

[163] And (O Prophet!) ask them of the city that stood by the sea where the fish came (to the shore) openly whenever its citizens observed their Sabbath and came not whenever they did not. Thus it was that We tried them, since they were transgressors.

وَسْـَٔلْهُمْ عَنِ الْقَرْيَةِ الَّتِىْ كَانَتْ حَاضِرَةَ الْبَحْرِ اِذْ يَعْدُوْنَ فِى السَّبْتِ اِذْ تَاْتِيْهِمْ حِيْتَانُهُمْ يَوْمَ سَبْتِهِمْ شُرَّعًا وَّيَوْمَ لَا يَسْبِتُوْنَ لَا تَاْتِيْهِمْ كَذٰلِكَ نَبْلُوْهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوْا يَفْسُقُوْنَ ﴿١٦٣﴾

[164] It was there that a group of its inhabitants had asked those (who were engaged in admonishing the people) why they exerted themselves for those whom God would destroy by way of chastisement. They said: "This (we do) to absolve ourselves from any charge of neglect of duty by your Lord and also in the hope that they may haply abstain from evil."

وَاِذْ قَالَتْ اُمَّةٌ مِّنْهُمْ لِمَ تَعِظُوْنَ قَوْمًا اللّٰهُ مُهْلِكُهُمْ اَوْ مُعَذِّبُهُمْ عَذَابًا شَدِيْدًا قَالُوْا مَعْذِرَةً اِلٰى رَبِّكُمْ وَلَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُوْنَ ﴿١٦٤﴾

[165] And when the people disregarded their warnings, We inflicted a severe chastisement on those who had done wrong and saved those who had admonished them.

فَلَمَّا نَسُوْا مَا ذُكِّرُوْا بِهٖ اَنْجَيْنَا الَّذِيْنَ يَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ السُّوْٓءِ وَاَخَذْنَا الَّذِيْنَ ظَلَمُوْا بِعَذَابٍ بَئِيْسٍ بِمَا كَانُوْا يَفْسُقُوْنَ ﴿١٦٥﴾

[166] And when (despite the chastisement inflicted on them), they arrogantly persisted in doing that which was forbidden them We said to them: "Be ye like apes despised."

فَلَمَّا عَتَوْا عَنْ مَّا نُهُوْا عَنْهُ قُلْنَا لَهُمْ كُوْنُوْا قِرَدَةً خٰسِـِٕيْنَ ﴿١٦٦﴾

(r) Verse 167 states that the act of imposing the yoke of oppressors on any people is in a way a punishment meted out to those who have persistently lived in wickedness.

(s) In the following verse (168), the law of life is pointed out that even such a wicked race is allowed a respite in order

that they might be forewarned of the results to follow from their wickedness, and restrain themselves and turn a new chapter of a better living. It is only when this chance is missed that the inevitable overtakes them.

The Israelites were dispersed into several groups, thereby affecting their very integrity as a race. This was the beginning of their fall. Still there were left among them a few righteous people; but the generations of them that followed were a people practically lost to reason and possessed little sense of the realities of life.

(*t*) Their situation grew so worse that their religious leaders began to barter away the truths of life for paltry worldly gains and fancied that they were quite secure in their position or felt confident that God somehow would forgive them.

When a people grow so hardened in error, they lose every sense of the retribution to follow and indeed feel that they are absolved from it and consequently continue to put a premium on their erratic thought and living. This was exactly the attitude of the Israelites who were obsessed with the thought that they were a chosen people of God and consequently hell-fire could never touch them. This indeed is the state to which even the followers of the *Qur'ān* are reduced. They have come to regard themselves as a people protected of God and consequently no hell-fire would ever touch them. They have come to believe that even if any one of them has committed sin, it would be washed out by enlisting himself as a disciple of some Sufi murshid or by muttering in a set form some phrase or verse from the *Qur'ān* or some freshly coined formula or by offering supererogatory prayers or by holding the Prophet's day or attending the anniversary celebration of some saint called "Urs". This has become the way of salvation with the present-day Muslims.

(*u*) It has already been pointed out in verse 159 that there were certainly a few among the followers of Moses who did follow the right path. It is now emphasised that success always lies with those who pursue the right path. The emphasis is to make it clear that right living never goes in vain.

[167] And then (O Prophet!) thy Lord declared (that should the Israelites refuse to desist from their evil path), He would impose on them till the day of Resurrection the yoke of others who would oppress them. (Remember) that thy Lord is prompt to punish and at the same time He is ever ready to forgive and show mercy.

وَإِذْ تَأَذَّنَ رَبُّكَ لَيَبْعَثَنَّ عَلَيْهِمْ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ مَن يَسُومُهُمْ سُوءَ الْعَذَابِ ۗ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَسَرِيعُ الْعِقَابِ ۖ وَإِنَّهُ لَغَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٦٧﴾

[168] We have dispersed them upon the earth by dividing them into groups. Some of them are upright and some not. And by good things and by evil things have We tried them to the intent that they might return to Us.

وَقَطَّعْنَاهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ أُمَمًا ۖ مِّنْهُمُ الصَّالِحُونَ وَمِنْهُمْ دُونَ ذَٰلِكَ ۖ وَبَلَوْنَاهُم بِالْحَسَنَاتِ وَالسَّيِّئَاتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿١٦٨﴾

[169] And they had for their successors (an unworthy) generation to inherit the Book who seize the vain things of this passing world (by bartering the truth upheld by the Book), and yet they vaunt: "It will be forgiven us." And they will continue to do so whenever they got a chance for a similar barter. Was not the condition laid upon them by their scripture that they should speak nought of God except what is true of Him. Do they not study the Book? For those who live righteously, the abode of the next world is of greater value (than anything obtained in this world). Cannot this simple truth be realised by them?

فَخَلَفَ مِن بَعْدِهِمْ خَلْفٌ وَرِثُوا الْكِتَابَ يَأْخُذُونَ عَرَضَ هَٰذَا الْأَدْنَىٰ وَيَقُولُونَ سَيُغْفَرُ لَنَا وَإِن يَأْتِهِمْ عَرَضٌ مِّثْلُهُ يَأْخُذُوهُ ۚ أَلَمْ يُؤْخَذْ عَلَيْهِم مِّيثَاقُ الْكِتَابِ أَن لَّا يَقُولُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْحَقَّ وَدَرَسُوا مَا فِيهِ ۗ وَالدَّارُ الْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ لِّلَّذِينَ يَتَّقُونَ ۗ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٦٩﴾

[170] And they who hold fast

وَالَّذِينَ يُمَسِّكُونَ بِالْكِتَابِ وَأَقَامُوا

to the Book and organize prayer (have nothing to fear). Indeed We will never let the reformers go unrequited.

الصَّلٰوةَ ۭ اِنَّا لَا نُضِيْعُ اَجْرَ الْمُصْلِحِيْنَ ﴿١٧٠﴾

[171] And when We let the mountain rise over them like a shaking canopy they thought it should fall upon them, We said: "Hold fast to the Book we have given you and remember what is therein to the end that you may abstain from evil."

وَاِذْ نَتَقْنَا الْجَبَلَ فَوْقَهُمْ كَاَنَّهٗ ظُلَّةٌ وَّظَنُّوْٓا اَنَّهٗ وَاقِعٌۢ بِهِمْ ۚ خُذُوْا مَآ اٰتَيْنٰكُمْ بِقُوَّةٍ وَّاذْكُرُوْا مَا فِيْهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُوْنَ ﴿١٧١﴾

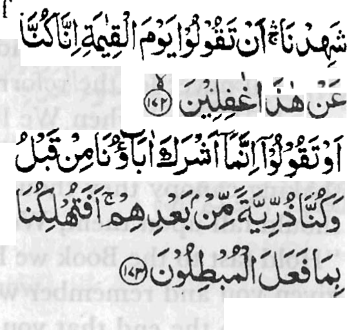
SECTION 22

(*v*) The *Qur'ān* proclaims that the belief in God, the supreme controller of the life of the Universe, is ingrained in the nature of man and the voice of that nature is the voice of affirmation of the existence of such a Being. No one can therefore take shelter for his lapses in thought and deed under the excuse that he had simply followed the practice of his ancestors. He should bear in mind that however much he might be influenced by the atmosphere around him, he could not afford to suppress the voice of his inner nature, unless he is resolved deliberately to suppress it.

This is the truth that emerges from the covenant taken from the Israelites mentioned in verse 171 that they would pursue the path divinely laid down for them, inspired by a true belief in God. The truth brought out here is that the way of life sponsored by the prophets is but one and the same and endorses that belief in God ingrained in the nature of man.

[172] And (O Prophet!) when thy Lord brought forth from the loins of the children of Adam their progeny to be and made them vouch for themselves whether He was not their Lord, they said: "Yes! We admit." And this

وَاِذْ اَخَذَ رَبُّكَ مِنْۢ بَنِيْٓ اٰدَمَ مِنْ ظُهُوْرِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ وَاَشْهَدَهُمْ عَلٰٓي اَنْفُسِهِمْ ۚ اَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ ۭ قَالُوْا بَلٰي ۚ



We did lest ye should pay on the day of Resurrection "Truly, of this were we uninformed";

[173] Or lest ye should say: "O Lord! It was our fathers who had set up peers for Our Lord and we have come only after them; (and have had only to imitate those who had just gone before us) Wilt Thou destroy us for what the erring folk had done?"

[174] Thus do We make our signs clear that haply people may return to the path of truth.

(26) The *Qur'ān* now draws attention to a similar situation confronting the Prophet. Even as it happened in the time of Moses and other prophets, a good many people from among the Arabs chose to thwart the mission of the Prophet. The Prophet is however asked not to feel disheartened on that account but to await the result of his labours.

There is a reference in verse 175 to a person who had resiled from the path of truth. The name of this person is not given; but the early commentators think that the reference is to a philosophic poet of the time of the Prophet, Ummiyah bin Abdullah Abis-Salat-Saqfi by name. He was a very intelligent person and had in the company of the people of the Book learnt what was meant by the path of goodness in life. He was thus fitted readily to respond favourably to the mission of the Prophet. But by sheer jealousy he declined to come forward to accept the faith of the Prophet. On the other hand, he secretly desired to proclaim himself as a prophet. The result was that the talent developed in him to accept truth was thus given a serious set-back and he was deprived of the blessings which otherwise would have been his share in life.

The verse likens him to a dog which dangles his tongue in every situation and applies the simile to the Arabs of the

Prophet's time who inveigled against him. Such a behaviour has indeed become second nature with them.

[175] Narrate to these people the story of him whom We had vouchsafed the talent to appreciate Our Signs and who (despite this talent) had discarded them, so much so that Satan pursued him and he became one of the seduced.

وَاتْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ الَّذِي آتَيْنَاهُ آيَاتِنَا فَانسَلَخَ مِنْهَا فَأَتْبَعَهُ الشَّيْطَانُ فَكَانَ مِنَ الْغَاوِينَ ﴿١٧٥﴾

[176] Had We pleased, We would have thereby (or through his adherence to Our signs) exalted him. But he took to the downward path and lost himself in his passions. His likeness is as that of the dog which lolls out his tongue whether thou chase him away or leave him alone. Such is the likeness of those who declare Our signs to be false. Narrate this story to them that they might reflect over it.

وَلَوْ شِئْنَا لَرَفَعْنَاهُ بِهَا وَلَٰكِنَّهُ أَخْلَدَ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ فَمَثَلُهُ كَمَثَلِ الْكَلْبِ إِن تَحْمِلْ عَلَيْهِ يَلْهَثْ أَوْ تَتْرُكْهُ يَلْهَث ذَّٰلِكَ مَثَلُ الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا فَاقْصُصِ الْقَصَصَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿١٧٦﴾

[177] How evil is the example they have set, of those who reject Our signs. They have injured themselves (and none else) by what they have done.

سَاءَ مَثَلًا الْقَوْمُ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا وَأَنفُسَهُمْ كَانُوا يَظْلِمُونَ ﴿١٧٧﴾

[178] He alone is rightly guided whom God guideth and they indeed are the lost whom God declineth to guide.

مَن يَهْدِ اللَّهُ فَهُوَ الْمُهْتَدِي وَمَن يُضْلِلْ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ ﴿١٧٨﴾

(27) The *Qur'ān* has repeatedly emphasised that the path of goodness is the path of reason and reflection, and the path of error is the path of ignorance or neglect of reason. Those who decline to profit by the divine gift of reason vouchsafed to man or simply yield to passion or self-will, do not heed to any

guidance offered to them. Such was the perverse mental state of the Arabs of the Prophet's time who opposed him. It is people such as these who deliberately court the life of Hell.

(28) To understand the realities of life, the straight way is to exercise reason and reflect over the meaning of things. He who avoids this path cannot be expected to return to the path of sanity.

(29) The picture which the *Qur'ān* has aimed to raise before us of the attributes of God is one of flawless beauty. It is why it styles the Divine attributes as things of beauty.

The *Qur'ān* draws attention to these attributes in various ways. They number ninetynine. They indicate the heights to which the concept of God rises in the estimation of the *Qur'ān*. An insight into them will disclose to the mind of man the realities of life in their deepest reaches.

(30) In verse 181 reference is made to a group of people among the Arabs who believed in the Unity of God and respected truth and were just in their dealings. It was this group who first appreciated the call of the Prophet and came forward to respond to it in earnest.

(31) In verse 183 attention is drawn to the law of respite at work in life and announces to the opponents of the Prophet that the law of retribution is sure to overtake them if they do not amend themselves betimes. The tribe of Quraish who were the most violent in their opposition had to their dismay to face what was anticipated.

(32) It has always been observed that the sponsors of truth have invariably been dubbed by their opponents as lunatics. Verses 184 and 185 point out that those opposed to truth rarely resort to reason or reflect over their own attitudes. Had the Quraish done this they would easily have realised that the Prophet who lived amidst them and was intimately known to them was indeed the embodiment of truth. They could easily have felt that even the tiniest object in the universe proclaimed, so to say, the existence of a Being who sustained and controlled the universe and regulated its life through the

laws devised by Him for this purpose. Such is the basic truth of life so simple to comprehend. And yet how abstruse, it may sadly be observed, has it became in the hands of our commentators of the *Qur'ān*.

[179] How many men and Jinn are there not whom We have marked for Hell—they who possess minds but refuse to understand, who possess eyes but refuse to see (what is good for them), and who possess ears and yet hearken not (to truth). They are just like brutes and indeed worse than these. It is people such as these who are lost to themselves.

وَلَقَدْ ذَرَأْنَا لِجَهَنَّمَ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الْجِنِّ وَ
الْإِنسِ ۖ لَهُمْ قُلُوبٌ لَّا يَفْقَهُونَ بِهَا
وَلَهُمْ أَعْيُنٌ لَّا يُبْصِرُونَ بِهَا ۚ وَلَهُمْ
آذَانٌ لَّا يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَا ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ كَالْأَنْعَامِ
بَلْ هُمْ أَضَلُّ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْغَافِلُونَ ﴿١٧٩﴾

[180] Most excellent are the names (or attributes) of God. So call on Him by these names. And stand aloof from those who profane His names (by disfiguring the picture of His beautiful attributes). The time is not far off when they shall have to pay for what they have done.

وَلِلَّهِ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ فَادْعُوهُ بِهَا ۖ وَذَرُوا
الَّذِينَ يُلْحِدُونَ فِي أَسْمَائِهِ ۚ سَيُجْزَوْنَ
مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٨٠﴾

[181] Among those whom We have created are a group of people who guide aright others and act justly.

وَمِمَّنْ خَلَقْنَا أُمَّةٌ يَهْدُونَ بِالْحَقِّ وَبِهِ يَعْدِلُونَ ﴿١٨١﴾

SECTION 23

[182] But as for those who treat Our signs as lies, We will by degrees bring them down in ways they hardly perceive.

وَالَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا سَنَسْتَدْرِجُهُم
مِّنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٨٢﴾

[183] And although We give them respite (as is Our wont), the

وَأُمْلِي لَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّ كَيْدِي مَتِينٌ ﴿١٨٣﴾

law of retribution is careful enough to overtake them inevitably.

[184] Do not they give any thought to it whether their comrade, (the Prophet who was born and brought up before them and whose life was an open book to them), could ever behave madly (wilfully courting the displeasure and enmity of his own associates). His only concern is to warn them openly (of the consequences which inevitably would overtake them for their misdeeds).

أَوَلَمْ يَتَفَكَّرُوا مَا بِصَاحِبِهِم مِّن جِنَّةٍ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٨٤﴾

[185] Cannot they mark the working of the heavens and the earth and of the life of everything that God hath created (to infer that under the law of causation) their term is well-nigh drawing to its end. And in what declaration after all this can they believe.

أَوَلَمْ يَنظُرُوا فِي مَلَكُوتِ السَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ مِن شَيْءٍ وَأَنْ عَسَىٰ أَن يَكُونَ قَدِ اقْتَرَبَ أَجَلُهُمْ فَبِأَيِّ حَدِيثٍ بَعْدَهُ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٨٥﴾

[186] There will be no one to guide those whom God lets go astray, (in other words, those who have discarded the path of success laid by God). He leaves them to eddy about in their obsession.

مَن يُضْلِلِ اللَّهُ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ وَيَذَرُهُمْ فِي طُغْيَانِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ ﴿١٨٦﴾

(33) The polytheists of Mecca used to taunt the Prophet at the Quranic idea of the Day of judgement. They used to ask him when that would come. In reply the *Qur'ān* states that it will assuredly come; but it will not announce its advent by any beating of drums in advance.

(34) The event referred to by the *Qur'ān* in this connection will take the form of a catastrophe overtaking the earth and the heavenly bodies.

This and the other verses of the *Qur'ān* touching this subject make it absolutely clear that the stories current among the Muslims that the event will be heralded by a series of anticipatory signs or incidents have no basis to rest on. The *Qur'ān* asserts that the catastrophe of the doomsday will be a sudden happening taking every one unaware.

(35) It has been a universal tendency among mankind to deify individuals among them if they display in life any extraordinary spiritual qualities. This was particularly so in pre-Islamic days. It was the privilege of the *Qur'ān* to proclaim in no unmistakable terms the absolute truth of Divine Unity and put an end for ever to this tendency of investing human beings with any form of Divinity. This was done by declaring that the Prophet of Islam himself was but a messenger and servant of God and not God Himself. That this Divine declaration was endorsed and upheld both in thought and action by the Prophet himself is proof of his sincerity. He did not even call upon those who had raised the founders of their religions to the position of God or the Son of God, to recognise him at least as a soothsayer. His one desire was to be recognised as a well-wisher of mankind, come forward to warn, on the one hand, those who were going astray, that an evil action would always breed an evil result and, on the other, to offer glad tidings to one and all that anything good that one may do would always bring them joy and happiness. He made it clear to those around him that he had not the talent to probe the unknown. Were it so, he would certainly have put himself on his guard against all possible dangers lying ahead. He would therefore not venture to foretell when the day of doom would happen. Can so frank a person ever say anything which is untruthful or false and misleading?

As the poet has exclaimed "who can determine the station he occupies in life of him who has the frankness to assure one and all that at best he is but a humble servant of God and not God Himself".

[187] (O Prophet!) They ask thee يَسْـَٔلُونَكَ عَنِ السَّاعَةِ أَيَّانَ مُرْسٰىهَا

when after all is the hour of judgment to come. Say, the knowledge of it is only with my Lord. None except He shall let it happen in its own time. It will be a catastrophe which will overtake the heavens and the earth and it will come upon you suddenly. They ask thee as if thou art privy to it. Say: "The knowledge of it is with none but God." But most men do not know this.

قُلْ إِنَّمَا عِلْمُهَا عِنْدَ رَبِّي ۚ لَا يُجَلِّيهَا
لِوَقْتِهَا إِلَّا هُوَ ۚ ثَقُلَتْ فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ
الْأَرْضِ ۚ لَا تَأْتِيكُمْ إِلَّا بَغْتَةً ۗ يَسْـَٔلُونَكَ
كَأَنَّكَ حَفِيٌّ عَنْهَا ۚ قُلْ إِنَّمَا عِلْمُهَا
عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ وَلٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٨٧﴾

[188] (O Prophet!) Tell them! "I have not even the power to have control over what may be helpful or hurtful to me personally: Whatever God willeth, that alone happens. Had I ever the knowledge of His secrets, I should have revelled in what was good for me and would have seen to it that no evil touched me. I am but a warner and an announcer of good tidings to those who believe."

قُلْ لَّا أَمْلِكُ لِنَفْسِي نَفْعًا وَّلَا ضَرًّا إِلَّا
مَا شَاءَ اللّٰهُ ۚ وَلَوْ كُنْتُ أَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبَ
لَاسْتَكْثَرْتُ مِنَ الْخَيْرِ ۚ وَمَا مَسَّنِيَ
السُّوْءُ ۚ إِنْ أَنَا إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ وَّبَشِيرٌ
لِّقَوْمٍ يُّؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٨٨﴾ ع

SECTION 24

(36) Verse 189 states that there are people who in distress invoke Divine aid but who, when that aid comes forth, attribute it to some shrine of theirs or some demi-god perched therein. This was the prevailing attitude of the Arabs of the Prophet's time for every good thing vouchsafed to them in life including children; they thanked their demi-gods rather than God whom they had really addressed their entreaties for the good things received. The verse incidentally implies that "shirk" or the act of setting up a peer for God, sometimes takes the form of designating a child as a created servant of

some demi-god or some spiritual leader. This was the practice of the pagan Arabs who styled their children after their demi-gods. The pity of it is that even the present-day Muslims who profess to pin their faith on the Unity of God have fallen into this serious error.

(37) The *Qur'ān* has repeatedly emphasised that terms of devotion should be applied to God and to none else. If this devotion is transferred to any object of creation, it will be an act of "shirk" or of setting up a peer for God by styling him "Ilah" or god.

[189] He it is (your Nourisher) who created you from a single life (in other words, the first ancestor of all the people on the earth was but a single individual). And from it brought He forth his mate that the two might dwell together in mutual comfort.

So when man turneth to his mate in affection, she bears a light burden and goes about with it, and when it becomes heavy, they both pray to God: "If Thou give us a healthy child, We will surely be of the thankful."

هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُم مِّن نَّفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَجَعَلَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا لِيَسْكُنَ إِلَيْهَا ۖ فَلَمَّا تَغَشَّاهَا حَمَلَتْ حَمْلًا خَفِيفًا فَمَرَّتْ بِهِ ۖ فَلَمَّا أَثْقَلَت دَّعَوَا اللَّهَ رَبَّهُمَا لَئِنْ آتَيْتَنَا صَالِحًا لَّنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الشَّاكِرِينَ ﴿١٨٩﴾

[190] But when He giveth them a healthy child, they join partners with God in return for what He hath given them. But mark! High is God above the partners they join with Him!

فَلَمَّا آتَاهُمَا صَالِحًا جَعَلَا لَهُ شُرَكَاءَ فِيمَا آتَاهُمَا ۚ فَتَعَالَى اللَّهُ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿١٩٠﴾

[191] Who are they whom they join with God as partners? They join with Him those who cannot create anything and are themselves created by God,

أَيُشْرِكُونَ مَا لَا يَخْلُقُ شَيْئًا وَهُمْ يُخْلَقُونَ ﴿١٩١﴾

[192] And have no power to help others or help themselves.

[193] And if you summon them to the right path, they will not follow you! For you the result will be the same, whether you call them or remain silent

[194] (O ye ignorant folk!) Truly they whom you call on beside God are like your ownselves His creatures! (If you believe that they have any supernatural powers in them) call on them then and see whether they answer you.

[195] Have they feet to walk with, eyes to see with, and ears to hear with? Say (to them, O Prophet!): "Call upon (so-called) partners (of God) and then try your guile against me and give me no rest (and then see the result of it)

[196] Verily, my friend is God who hath sent down the Book; and He befriends the righteous"

وَلَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ لَهُمْ نَصْرًا وَلَا أَنفُسَهُمْ يَنصُرُونَ ﴿١٩٢﴾

وَإِن تَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَى الْهُدَىٰ لَا يَتَّبِعُوكُمْ ۚ سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْكُمْ أَدَعَوْتُمُوهُمْ أَمْ أَنتُمْ صَامِتُونَ ﴿١٩٣﴾

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ عِبَادٌ أَمْثَالُكُمْ ۖ فَادْعُوهُمْ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لَكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿١٩٤﴾

أَلَهُمْ أَرْجُلٌ يَمْشُونَ بِهَا ۖ أَمْ لَهُمْ أَيْدٍ يَبْطِشُونَ بِهَا ۖ أَمْ لَهُمْ أَعْيُنٌ يُبْصِرُونَ بِهَا ۖ أَمْ لَهُمْ آذَانٌ يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَا ۗ قُلِ ادْعُوا شُرَكَاءَكُمْ ثُمَّ كِيدُونِ فَلَا تُنظِرُونِ ﴿١٩٥﴾

إِنَّ وَلِيِّيَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي نَزَّلَ الْكِتَابَ ۖ وَهُوَ يَتَوَلَّى الصَّالِحِينَ ﴿١٩٦﴾

(38) The central idea of this chapter was to cheer up the early followers of the Prophet with the thought that they should not feel disheartened by the huge obstacles crossing their path but should feel assured that by adhering to truth steadfastly they would inevitably or, as a matter of course, overcome the obstacles and achieve success. The greater the effort which the opponents of truth make to discredit it, the greater will be their eventual frustration.

If you look back on all that has been stated in this chapter, you will not fail to see that everything revolves around the central idea just referred to above, and which is kept in the forefront from the beginning to the very end of it.

(1) The chapter emphasises that however strong the

opposition which the polytheists of Mecca might offer to the mission of the Prophet, they would certainly never succeed in their attempts since truth is not on their side.

(2) Those who are obdurate in their perversity will not yield to reason.

(3) It should behove the followers of the Faith that they should display forbearance in a situation such as this, and invite those who disagree with them to reflect over their behaviour and make amends.

(4) At any rate they should not despair. To exhibit faint-heartedness in the face of perverse opposition is to display qualities not worthy of those who believe in God and repose their faith in Him.

Doubts and fears do cross the mind of man in moments of trouble. But it will be up to those who lay their trust in God to brush them aside as of no consequence and seek the light of faith to help them against their detractors. To succumb to such weakness and lose heart is the way of those who have no faith in God.

(5) Verse 199 draws attention to a fundamental teaching of the *Qur'ān*. In but a terse phraseology, the solution to the difficulties of life is here outlined.

The task before the followers of the faith is to forgive the unthinking lot and not relax in their effort to invite them to the path of goodness. This is the way to face every form of difficulty in life and attain success.

(39) Verse 198 observes that they who have refused to follow the Prophet have not tried properly to understand him. Had they looked into his mind earnestly, they would surely have hailed him as a man of truth. It is the presence of earnestness or lack of it in the minds of those who have approached the Prophet that makes the difference. For example here was Salman of Fars or Iran, who the moment he beheld the Prophet and listened to him, cried out: "By God! It's not the face of an

imposter that I behold!" On the other hand, there was the uncle of the Prophet himself, Abu Jahal, who bantered: "Is this fellow a prophet; he eats food and goes about the market!"

[197] But they whom you call on beside God, can lend you no help, nor have they power to help themselves.

والذين تدعون من دونه لا يستطيعون نصركم ولا أنفسهم ينصرون ١٩٧

[198] If thou (O Prophet)! summon them to the right path, they will not hearken. Thou mayest think they look towards thee. In reality they look not on thee.

وإن تدعوهم إلى الهدى لا يسمعوا وتراهم ينظرون إليك وهم لا يبصرون ١٩٨

[199] Exercise forbearance, and enjoin what is right and turn away from those who decline to understand.

خذ العفو وأمر بالعرف وأعرض عن الجاهلين ١٩٩

[200] If any provocation is given thee by Satan, turn to God for refuge. He verily heareth, knoweth.

وإما ينزغنك من الشيطان نزغ فاستعذ بالله إنه سميع عليم ٢٠٠

[201] They who fear God turn to God when some phantom from Satan touches them and then they see through things clearly;

إن الذين اتقوا إذا مسهم طائف من الشيطان تذكروا فإذا هم مبصرون ٢٠١

[202] While they who are fraternal (towards Satan) continue to drag them (the righteous) into error and do not slacken their efforts.

وإخوانهم يمدونهم في الغي ثم لا يقصرون ٢٠٢

[203] And whenever thou bringeth not a verse to them (of the *Qur'ān*) they say: "Why do you not ask for one?" Say (to them): "I only follow my Lord's utterance to me. It is these which offer proofs from your Lord and guidance and mercy for those who lay their trust in Him."

وإذا لم تأتهم بآية قالوا لولا اجتبيتها قل إنما أتبع ما يوحى إلي من ربي هذا بصائر من ربكم وهدى ورحمة لقوم يؤمنون ٢٠٣

[204] And when the *Qur'ān* is recited, then (O believers!) listen

وإذا قرئ القرآن فاستمعوا له و

to it in silence in order that you might receive mercy.

أَنصِتُوا لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿٢٠٤﴾

[205] And remember God within thee morn and evening in awe and humility; and (if thou art to mutter anything in praise of God do it) in silent tone and be always heedful of Him.

وَاذْكُر رَّبَّكَ فِي نَفْسِكَ تَضَرُّعًا وَّخِيفَةً وَّدُونَ الْجَهْرِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ بِالْغُدُوِّ وَالْآصَالِ وَلَا تَكُن مِّنَ ا

[206] They who feel the presence of God in them never feel absolved from offering devotion to God; they extol Him and bow down before Him.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ عِندَ رَبِّكَ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِهِ وَيُسَبِّحُونَهُ وَلَهُ يَسْجُدُونَ ﴿٢٠٦﴾

CHAPTER VIII

SPOILS OF WAR

DELIVERED AT MADINA

SECTION 1

(1) When the Prophet embarked on his mission at Mecca, its inhabitants were naturally divided into two groups. One group consisted of those who willingly responded to his call. The other group was composed of the rest of the people headed by their respective tribal chiefs who, one and all, were opposed to the Prophet's mission.

Here, note the basis of the conflict between the two groups. Those who followed the Prophet claimed the right to follow that which they were convinced in their minds was the right path. Those who opposed them denied them this right. They were not inclined to allow them freedom of conscience. They were intent on dissuading the followers of the Prophet from believing in the truths which he propounded. For nearly 13 years, the Prophet bore patiently the persecution of those who were opposed to his mission. But when he found that his life at Mecca was in danger, he repaired to Madina. Even here, he was not allowed any rest. Repeatedly did his enemies manage to attack him even here In the face of this situation, three ways were open before the Prophet.

(*a*) One was to disown whatever truth he had preached.
(*b*) The second was to stand fast to the truths in which he believed and helplessly leave his followers to be persecuted by his enemies.
(*c*) The third alternative was to stand resolutely along with his following against the tyranny and oppression of his enemies and leave the result to God.

The Prophet adopted the third alternative and the result was what had always happened in such cases; Truth triumphed in the end.

War is allowed by the *Qur'ān* only in situations such as this, only when it is brought on you wilfully by those who would not let the cause of truth prevail among mankind.

The present chapter deals with the state of war in which the followers of the Prophet were involved. Necessarily, a few directions are given in this chapter, as well as in the next, as to how the followers of the Faith were to conduct themselves in a state of war.

(2) The *Qur'ān* makes it clear that the spoils of war should belong to God and the Prophet as head of the State, in other words, to the citizens of the State as a whole. No one was entitled to take away what fell to his hand.

Every little thing gathered in the battlefield should be brought before the leader for equitable distribution among the faithful.

(3) They should live and work together in mutual good-will and affection towards one another both in times of peace and in times of war.

(4) In every situation, they should live a life of orderly devotion to the truths of life enjoined on them if they cared to achieve success in life.

(5) He alone is a true believer whose mind is suffused with the love of God grown stronger as every moment passes, who observes the prescribed prayers and who never gets tired of spending what he has in the way of God or for others or for those in need.

(6) The above observation is based on the fact of life that faith in God or in any truth, although professed by one and all, is not equally intense in every case.

قَالَ الْمَلَأُ ۹   الانفال ۸

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

سُوْرَةُ الْاَنْفَالِ مَدَنِيَّةٌ وَهِيَ خَمْسٌ وَّسَبْعُوْنَ اٰيَةً وَّعَشْرُ رُكُوْعَاتٍ

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ۝

[1] (O Prophet!) They question thee what to make of the spoils of war. Say:

يَسْـَٔلُوْنَكَ عَنِ الْاَنْفَالِ ۗ قُلِ الْاَنْفَالُ

"The spoils are God's and the apostle's. Therefore be mindful of God without quarrelling among yourselves (over the spoils of war), and obey God and the Prophet if ye be true believers."

لِلّٰهِ وَالرَّسُوْلِ ۚ فَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ وَاَصْلِحُوْا ذَاتَ بَيْنِكُمْ ۪ وَاَطِيْعُوا اللّٰهَ وَرَسُوْلَهٗۤ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِيْنَ ①

[2] They alone are believers whose hearts thrill with the thought of God whenever His name is mentioned, and whose faith in Him increases as His revelations are recited, and who place implicit trust in their Lord,

اِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ الَّذِيْنَ اِذَا ذُكِرَ اللّٰهُ وَجِلَتْ قُلُوْبُهُمْ وَاِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ اٰيٰتُهٗ زَادَتْهُمْ اِيْمَانًا وَّعَلٰى رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُوْنَ ②

[3] who observe prayers, and give to others out of what We have provided them with.

الَّذِيْنَ يُقِيْمُوْنَ الصَّلٰوةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنٰهُمْ يُنْفِقُوْنَ ③

[4] Such indeed are the true believers; their due places of honour lie with their Lord, as well as His forgiveness and generous means of sustenance.

اُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ حَقًّا ۭ لَهُمْ دَرَجٰتٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ وَّرِزْقٌ كَرِيْمٌ ④

[5] Remember how thy Lord caused thee (at Badr) to go forth from thy home in the cause of truth and how some of the believers were quite averse to go forth (with thee).

كَمَآ اَخْرَجَكَ رَبُّكَ مِنْ بَيْتِكَ بِالْحَقِّ ۠ وَاِنَّ فَرِيْقًا مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ لَكٰرِهُوْنَ ⑤

[6] (On that occasion) they disputed with thee over the rightness (of the steps to be taken) which had been made so clear to them; they thought that they were being led forth to death with eyes wide open.

يُجَادِلُوْنَكَ فِي الْحَقِّ بَعْدَ مَا تَبَيَّنَ كَاَنَّمَا يُسَاقُوْنَ اِلَى الْمَوْتِ وَهُمْ يَنْظُرُوْنَ ⑥

[7] And (O ye Muslims!) remember when God promised you that one of the two enemy parties should fall into your hands while you desired that they who had no arms should fall into your hands. On the other hand God purposed

وَاِذْ يَعِدُكُمُ اللّٰهُ اِحْدَى الطَّاۗىِٕفَتَيْنِ اَنَّهَا لَكُمْ وَتَوَدُّوْنَ اَنَّ غَيْرَ ذَاتِ الشَّوْكَةِ تَكُوْنُ لَكُمْ وَيُرِيْدُ اللّٰهُ

to prove the truth of His words by rooting out the enemy, (who were fully armed),

أَنْ يُّحِقَّ الْحَقَّ بِكَلِمٰتِهٖ وَيَقْطَعَ دَابِرَ الْكٰفِرِيْنَ ۝٧

[8] That He might prove that truth always prevails and falsehood comes to nought, however much the evil-minded may dislike it.

لِيُحِقَّ الْحَقَّ وَيُبْطِلَ الْبَاطِلَ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُجْرِمُوْنَ ۝٨

(7) In Pre-Islamic days, it was a common practice in warfare to let one appropriate for himself whatever he could secure as booty. Similar was the practice among the Romans; and even today it is the common rule among the European nations. Those who captured a town or a fort usually indulged in free loot for a specific number of hours. In fact when the British forces in India captured Srirangapattam, Bharatpur, and Sind Hyderabad, they were allowed to loot freely. When in 1857 Delhi was captured, the loot continued for full seven days, every one keeping to himself what he secured in the loot. The *Qur'ān*, by issuing a decree that the booty taken in warfare belonged to the State, and not to any individuals who siezed it, prevented the rise in the breasts of the combatants of any urge for greed or avarice.

This was a restriction new to the Arabs. It was bound to create uneasiness in their minds. But the *Qur'ān* called upon them to be mindful of God and obey His command. It pointed out to them that it was not worthy of a believer to appropriate whatever came easy to him. It drew their attention to what had happened on a previous occasion, viz. the battle of Badr. The men who had fought in that battle had desired to keep everything to themselves. But the decision of the Prophet ran counter to their wishes. It undoubtedly caused a good deal of grumbling. But everyone eventually had to admit that the right course was that which the Prophet had decided upon.

(8) This was what happened at Badr. In the second year of Hijra, a large force of the Meccans came to attack Madina. About this time a caravan of Meccan traders returning home from Syria was about to pass Madina. Feeling that a battle with either of the two forces converging on Madina was

imminent, the Prophet told his followers in Madina that fighting was being forced on them, and that therefore they should not shirk the responsibility of defending themselves and assured them that success would be theirs in the encounter. His followers desired him to fight the caravan from the Syrian side, which was but small in number, and practically unarmed. They were averse to fight the armed force from Mecca which was large in number, particularly in view of the fact that they themselves were not only few in number but were poorly equipped. But the Prophet would not share their view. He decided upon meeting the attack of the stronger force from Mecca. So inspiring was his lead at the moment that a small band of but 313 ill-equipped followers of his responded to his call and gave a crushing defeat to the entire army of the Meccans.

Note that in Verse 7, the expression "they who had no arms" refers to the caravan coming from Syria. Note also that Verse 6 draws attention to the fact that although some of the followers of the Prophet had expected that he would give his decision in favour of fighting the force from Mecca, they were not happy over it when it was given. In fact, they felt that they were being hurled into the jaws of death.

(9) In Verse 10, the good tidings of angels coming to help the faithful was meant to hearten them. This was the manner of expressing that God would help them by infusing in them added strength. It did not mean that any angels were actually to fight on their side. This is the view held by the leading commentators of the *Qur'ān* and scholars versed in Hadith. Angels participating in the fight is not proved; nor was there any need for them to do so. In fact, in Verse 12, the order "smite" was given to the followers of the Prophet, to the Muslim fighters and not to the angels.

The phenomenon of angels coming down in connection with the engagement at Badr is at best a matter which belongs to the domain of the unknowable and human intellect cannot probe it.

(10) In the battle of Badr the position of the Muslims was

very weak indeed. Altogether there were but 313 men fit to give battle; and none of them except one had a horse to ride on. Naturally, therefore, the followers of the Faith fell into a state of despondency. The weak-minded among them entertained a variety of doubts. To make matters worse, there was but one source of water to draw; and that was in the hands of the enemy. To add to their difficulty, the sandy ground was slushy. They could not rest their feet thereon firmly. The enemy, on the other hand, were on horse-back. Such was the predicament in which the Muslims found themselves at the moment.

(11) Verse 11 points out how their difficulties were solved by Nature. Before they could move on to battle, they fell into a sort of deep slumber, so much so that when they awoke, they felt their minds at rest, with fears no longer to disturb them. "During the first night at Badr" says Hazrath Ali, "there was none who did not have a sound sleep. Only the Prophet was awake, deeply engaged in communion with God." (Baihaqi, Fid-dalayal). It is a matter of common experience that when one is disturbed in mind, he cannot enjoy sound sleep. But the fact that despite their worries the followers of the Prophet did have a good sleep was indeed a good augury. And then to ease their minds still further, there was a sudden outburst of heavy rain which afforded them the water that they needed. All this went to dispel their erstwhile low spirits and restore confidence in themselves. At times even an ordinary phenomenon of nature decides the fate of an army engaged in a battle. Historians who have written of the battle of Waterloo are all agreed that it was the falling of rain during the night between the 17th and the 18th of June 1815 which decided the fate of Europe. The rain prevented Napoleon from moving to action for full twelve hours. But for this, he would surely have started his attack and put down Wellington before Blucher could arrive on the scene to his rescue. Had it not rained at the crucial hour, the entire map of Europe would have taken a different shape. Likewise had no rain fallen at Badr, the cause of righteous living would have

received a serious set-back. So heavy was the anxiety that weighed on the mind of the Prophet in regard to the crisis facing him that during the night preceding the battle, he fervently prayed: "O God! Should this small band of Thy servants perish now, there will be left on earth no one truly devoted to Thee."

[9] When you sought succour of your Lord, He answered you: "Surely will I aid you with a thousand angels, rank on rank."

إِذْ تَسْتَغِيثُونَ رَبَّكُمْ فَاسْتَجَابَ لَكُمْ أَنِّي مُمِدُّكُم بِأَلْفٍ مِّنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ مُرْدِفِينَ ﴿٩﴾

[10] And God meant by this to offer you good tidings and to hearten you thereby; Succour cometh from God alone! Verily God is Mighty, Wise.

وَمَا جَعَلَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بُشْرَىٰ وَلِتَطْمَئِنَّ بِهِ قُلُوبُكُمْ ۚ وَمَا النَّصْرُ إِلَّا مِنْ عِندِ اللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿١٠﴾

SECTION 2

[11] Recollect the occasion when as a sign of security from Him, sleep fell upon you and He sent down upon you water from the skies that He might give thereby the opportunity of having a wish (which you had been denied by the enemy who had seized all the wells nearby) and thus dispel any misgiving which you might have entertained prompted by Satan (in your predicament), and strengthened your hearts and let your feet rest firmly on the ground.

إِذْ يُغَشِّيكُمُ النُّعَاسَ أَمَنَةً مِّنْهُ وَيُنَزِّلُ عَلَيْكُم مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً لِّيُطَهِّرَكُم بِهِ وَيُذْهِبَ عَنكُمْ رِجْزَ الشَّيْطَانِ وَلِيَرْبِطَ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِكُمْ وَيُثَبِّتَ بِهِ الْأَقْدَامَ ﴿١١﴾

[12] On that occasion thy Lord inspired the angels with the assurance: "I will be with you; therefore, steady the hearts of the faithful, I will cast a dread into the hearts of the unbelievers." So ye

إِذْ يُوحِي رَبُّكَ إِلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ أَنِّي مَعَكُمْ فَثَبِّتُوا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ۚ سَأُلْقِي فِي قُلُوبِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا الرُّعْبَ فَاضْرِبُوا فَوْقَ

smite above their necks and smite their finger-tips.

الاعناق واضربوا منهم كل بنان ﴿١٢﴾

[13] This because they had opposed God and His Apostle. And to those who oppose God and His Apostle, God will surely be severe in punishment.

ذلك بانهم شاقوا الله ورسوله و من يشاقق الله ورسوله فان الله شديد العقاب ﴿١٣﴾

[14] (O Ye who oppose truth!) Such is your recompense! Taste it then! (Remember) for those who oppose truth there is the chastisement of fire.

ذلكم فذوقوه وان للكفرين عذاب النار ﴿١٤﴾

[15] O Ye who believe! when you meet the marshalled host of the unbelievers, do not turn your backs on them.

يايها الذين امنوا اذا لقيتم الذين كفروا زحفا فلا تولوهم الادبار ﴿١٥﴾

[16] He who shall turn his back on them that day, unless he turns aside to fight or to rally to some other troop, shall incur the displeasure of God. Hell shall be his abode, a wretched destination.

ومن يولهم يومئذ دبره الا متحرفا لقتال او متحيزا الى فئة فقد باء بغضب من الله وماوىه جهنم وبئس المصير ﴿١٦﴾

[17] So it was not ye who slew the enemy, it was God who slew them. And when thou didst send forth (thy shaft) it was not thee who did, it was God who did it; God meant by this to confer a special favour on the believers. Verily God Heareth, Knoweth.

فلم تقتلوهم ولكن الله قتلهم وما رميت اذ رميت ولكن الله رمى وليبلي المؤمنين منه بلاء حسنا ان الله سميع عليم ﴿١٧﴾

[18] This event will bring home to you that God means to weaken the strategy of the unbelievers.

ذلكم وان الله موهن كيد الكفرين ﴿١٨﴾

[19] (O Meccans!) If you had sought to force a decision, that decision hath now come to you. It will be better for you if you desist, for, if you return (to the struggle), We also shall return, and

ان تستفتحوا فقد جاءكم الفتح وان تنتهوا فهو خير لكم وان تعودوا نعد ولن تغني عنكم فئتكم

your forces though they may be many, shall never avail you aught, for, God is on the side of the believers.

شيئا ولو كثرت وأن الله مع المؤمنين ﴿١٩﴾

SECTION 3

[20] (O ye believers!) Obey God and His Apostle and turn not away from him now that you have heard (the truth);

يا أيها الذين آمنوا أطيعوا الله ورسوله ولا تولوا عنه وأنتم تسمعون ﴿٢٠﴾

[21] And be not like those who say: "We are listening," and yet they do not,

ولا تكونوا كالذين قالوا سمعنا وهم لا يسمعون ﴿٢١﴾

[22] for, the vilest beasts in the sight of God are those (men) who are dead to the sense of hearing and speech and decline to understand.

إن شر الدواب عند الله الصم البكم الذين لا يعقلون ﴿٢٢﴾

[23] Hath God found in them the slightest urge to do good, he would certainly have made them hearken (to truth), but even if He hath made them do so, they would certainly have turned back, since they are averse (to hearken to any truth).

ولو علم الله فيهم خيرا لأسمعهم ولو أسمعهم لتولوا وهم معرضون ﴿٢٣﴾

(12) In Verse 15 it has been pointed out that it is a sin on the part of the Muslims to run away when they are attacked by their enemy, even though they may be double in number; they must trust in God and never turn their backs on their enemy. This is a general rule, which Muslims are expected to observe whenever they were attacked by anyone. It was not meant to apply only to the situation at Badr.

(13) The Meccans though defeated at Badr, did not slack their efforts to intrigue against the Prophet; but their intrigues came to nought.

(14) The Meccan unbelievers used to taunt the Muslims

hitherto by saying: "Where is the victory which, you say, God has promised you to grant?" In fact during the battle of Badr, Abu Jahl, the Prophet's uncle, who was on the enemy side had prayed: "Oh God! Give victory to one of the two hosts whose religion is acceptable to Thee." Verse 19 gives the answer by stating that victory had been granted to the Muslims. It however observes that should the unbelievers desist from further mischief, all would still be well with them. The verse thus makes it clear that bloodshed was repugnant to the Prophet. Had they listened to this advice, the Arabian land would not have witnessed the further battles which the Meccans fought against the Prophet.

(15) Verse 21 has a reference to the people of the Book, the Jews and the Christians. It says that the two peoples listen to the *Torah* and the New Testament recited to them. But in reality, they listen not; for, had they really understood what they had listened to, they should have moulded their actions in accordance with its directions.

It is a pity that the Muslims of today listen to the *Qur'ān* recited to them exactly in the same manner as the Jews and the Christians had done in the past. They think that it is enough for them if the sound of the Quranic word enters their ears. To let the voice into their ears is their primary aim. They have nothing further to do with it.

(16) Verse 22 calls for serious reflection. Its call is reverberated from every page of the *Qur'ān*. The call is to understand things aright or to make a rational approach to the problems of life. The verse emphasises that the vilest beasts in the sight of God are those human beings who are dead to the sense of reason. The state of thought or mind designated as 'Kufr' or denial of truth is the outcome of this abandonment of reason in one's approach to the problems of life.

(17) In Verse 22, the *Qur'ān* states that the aim of the Prophet's mission is to give you life. In other words, it is a call to let mankind reach perfection by disclosing the highest potentialities of human nature. Reflect over the manner whereby people dead to life were revived or resuscitated by the Prophet, so to

say, from their graves and energised to move about in the different spheres of life. What greater proof is needed to demonstrate how the Prophet's mission resuscitated the dead than the fact that he raised from among the camel drivers of the Arabian desert great personalities such as Abu Bakr, Umar, Ali, Aisha, Khalid, Ibn Waqqas, Ibn Al-Aas and others and converted wild people like the Arabs into a progressive civilised community?

The *Qur'ān* points out further that in the sphere of human thought and action there is always a principle of life at work. Very often and quite suddenly something crosses the purposes of man, with the result that he turns away from the right path and takes to the wrong one, and likewise, from the wrong path to the right one. Our own experiences of life will corroborate this fact of life. So, it is upto us to keep a careful watch on our day-to-day thought and activity. The care is called for in every case; for, no one should forget that ultimately we have to return to God and give account of our deeds done in the life present.

(18) In the previous verse, the *Qur'ān* had warned man to beware of the dangers crossing individual life. Now in Verse 25, attention is drawn to the dangers confronting the collective life of communities. The *Qur'ān* calls on mankind in general to protect themselves against the mischief that is wrought in the life of a society by the misdeeds of even a single individual member of it. The mischief does not hurt only the mischief-doer, but it encircles the entire society. The moral principle involved here is this that, inasmuch as, the other members of society had made no attempt to check the vagaries of the mischief-monger among them and liquidate his mischief in time, they will necessarily have to share with him the result of his misdeed.

(19) Verse 27 refers to the evil tendency in man called dishonesty. This may take numerous forms. In a state of war, anything done against the directions of one's leader or against the purposes underlying the waging of a war, is here styled dishonest conduct. The order had been given by the Prophet

that no one should communicate with any one in Mecca, the stronghold of his enemies, although it may be with one's own wife and children left behind. The order was issued because several people in the Prophet's camp who had come over to the Prophet's side from Mecca had unwittingly disclosed in their communications to their relations in Mecca the plans of the Prophet in respect of the fight against the Meccans. If this is the criterion by which one's honesty is to be judged, what are we to think of those Muslims living in the Muslim lands who have spent their lives in the service of those foreigners who have for nearly 150 years kept their countries under their subjection?

[24] O ye who believe! Respond to the call of God and the Apostle when He calleth you to that which will give you life and know that God crosses human desires for the good of man by coming in between man and his heart and know also that it is to Him that ye have to return.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اسْتَجِيبُوا لِلَّهِ وَ
لِلرَّسُولِ إِذَا دَعَاكُمْ لِمَا يُحْيِيكُمْ وَ
اعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَحُولُ بَيْنَ الْمَرْءِ وَ
قَلْبِهِ وَأَنَّهُ إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

[25] Beware of the temptation which by no means cometh to the wicked alone and know that God is severe in chastisement.

وَاتَّقُوا فِتْنَةً لَا تُصِيبَنَّ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا
مِنْكُمْ خَاصَّةً وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ
﴿٢٥﴾

[26] And remember the time when you were but few (at Mecca) and held of little account in the land and in dread of those who would forcibly expel you. It was then that He found for you a place of refuge (Madina) and strengthened you with His help and provided you with the good things of life that haply ye might give thanks.

وَاذْكُرُوا إِذْ أَنْتُمْ قَلِيلٌ مُسْتَضْعَفُونَ
فِي الْأَرْضِ تَخَافُونَ أَنْ
النَّاسُ فَآوَاكُمْ
وَأَيَّدَكُمْ بِنَصْرِهِ وَرَزَقَكُمْ مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾

[27] O ye who believe! Deal not falsely with God and His Apostle

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَخُونُوا اللَّهَ

and do not betray your trusts knowingly.

الرَّسُولَ وَتَخُونُوٓا أَمَٰنَٰتِكُمْ وَأَنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾

[28] And know that your possessions and your children are a temptation and (do not forget) that it is with God alone that there lieth a generous recompense.

وَاعْلَمُوٓا أَنَّمَآ أَمْوَٰلُكُمْ وَأَوْلَٰدُكُمْ فِتْنَةٌ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ عِندَهُۥٓ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٢٨﴾

SECTION 4

(20) Verse 29 has made it clear that those who are mindful of living a righteous life develop in them the talent to distinguish between right and wrong, or good and evil, and never lean towards anything evil. The world has witnessed how true this observation was in the case of the first generation of Muslims. The nomads of the Arabian desert swiftly could reach a position in life from where they could control the destinies of such civilised nations as the Iranians and the Romans. The talents developed in them to distinguish between right and wrong enabled them to be scrupulously just and fair with them in all mutual dealings.

(21) Ponder over Verse 30 and note what man in his recklessness ventures to plan out things for himself and how God in his wisdom meets it. Did the Meccans even anticipate how sad would be the end of all their plans against God? They perished at their own hands—victims to their own intemperate passions. Such is the law at work in life. Had there been no persecution of the Prophet by these Meccans, the Prophet would never have thought of repairing to Madina and things would have taken a different turn.

(22) In Verse 32 there is a reference to the attitude of Abu Jehal and other Meccan leaders towards the mission of the Prophet. In the course of their fight against the Prophet Abu Jehal once prayed: "O God! If the Quran has really come from Thee, give dire punishment to us for having rejected it." (Bukhari). Came the Divine reply : "It is not the way of God to punish for their wrong-doing while the Prophet engaged

in the work of their reform is still working among them, or while they are inclined to seek forgiveness." But in Verse 34 it is made clear that when the Prophet is no longer in their midst, having been forced to take refuge elsewhere and while the wrong-doers were still active in persecuting the believers and preventing them to enter their house of prayer, there was then no ground to withhold the punishment. So it happened and the Quraish of Mecca were deprived of the position they had enjoyed in society till then.

(23) The Verse also makes it clear that they who do not live righteously shall not be entitled to hold the position of custodians of the holy places.

[29] O ye who believe! If you are mindful of God, He will develop in you the talent to distinguish between right and wrong and put away from you your sins and forgive you; for, profound is the Graciousness of God.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِن تَتَّقُوا اللَّهَ يَجْعَل
لَّكُمْ فُرْقَانًا وَيُكَفِّرْ عَنكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَ
يَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٢٩﴾

[30] And call to mind the occasion when the unbelievers (at Mecca) plotted against thee to detain thee as prisoner or to kill thee or to banish thee. They plotted but God (in His turn) planned His own plan (against evil). God is the best of planners.

وَإِذْ يَمْكُرُ بِكَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُ
وا لِيُثْبِتُوكَ أَوْ يَقْتُلُوكَ أَوْ يُخْرِجُوكَ
وَيَمْكُرُونَ وَيَمْكُرُ اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ
خَيْرُ الْمَاكِرِينَ ﴿٣٠﴾

[31] And oft as Our revelations were rehearsed to them, they said: "Now have we heard: if we choose to do so, we could recite even like them. After all they are mere tales of ancient times." ㉛

وَإِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُنَا قَالُوا قَدْ
سَمِعْنَا لَوْ نَشَاءُ لَقُلْنَا مِثْلَ
هَٰذَا إِنْ هَٰذَا إِلَّا أَسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ

[32] And (O prophet) they said: "God! If this be the very truth from thee, rain down stones upon us from above or lay on us some grievous chastisement."

وَإِذْ قَالُوا اللَّهُمَّ إِن كَانَ هَٰذَا هُوَ
الْحَقَّ مِنْ عِندِكَ فَأَمْطِرْ عَلَيْنَا حِجَارَةً
مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ أَوِ ائْتِنَا بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ﴿٣٢﴾

[33] But God chose not to chastise

وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُعَذِّبَهُمْ وَأَنتَ فِيهِمْ وَمَا

them while thou wast in their midst, nor would He chastise them while they seek forgiveness.

كَانَ اللّٰهُ مُعَذِّبَهُمْ وَهُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُوْنَ ﴿٣٣﴾

[34] But now that they have (forced thee to leave Mecca and) debarred the faithful from entering the Holy Mosque, although they are not fit to be its guardians, there is no plea why God should not chastise them. It is only the God-fearing who are entitled to be its guardians, but most of them do not realise this.

وَمَا لَهُمْ اَلَّا يُعَذِّبَهُمُ اللّٰهُ وَهُمْ يَصُدُّوْنَ عَنِ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَمَا كَانُوْٓا اَوْلِيَآءَهٗ اِنْ اَوْلِيَآؤُهٗٓ اِلَّا الْمُتَّقُوْنَ وَلٰكِنَّ اَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٣٤﴾

[35] And their prayer at the House (Of God) takes only the form of whistling and of clapping of hands. So, let them taste the chastisement for their having mocked at the Faith.

وَمَا كَانَ صَلَاتُهُمْ عِنْدَ الْبَيْتِ اِلَّا مُكَآءً وَّتَصْدِيَةً فَذُوْقُوا الْعَذَابَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْفُرُوْنَ ﴿٣٥﴾

[36] The unbelievers spend their wealth with the intent to turn men aside from the way of God. Let them continue to spend; but when they are eventually overthrown, deep sorrow will rest on them (for what they had spent). And they who have denied the Faith (and continued to cling to their unbelief) they will be driven together towards Hell,

اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا يُنْفِقُوْنَ اَمْوَالَهُمْ لِيَصُدُّوْا عَنْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ فَسَيُنْفِقُوْنَهَا ثُمَّ تَكُوْنُ عَلَيْهِمْ حَسْرَةً ثُمَّ يُغْلَبُوْنَ ۬ وَالَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْٓا اِلٰى جَهَنَّمَ يُحْشَرُوْنَ ﴿٣٦﴾

[37] So that God might separate the bad from the good and of the bad every one set one with his like, and then collect them all and turn them together toward Hell (on the day of Judgment). These are they who shall be the losers.

لِيَمِيْزَ اللّٰهُ الْخَبِيْثَ مِنَ الطَّيِّبِ وَيَجْعَلَ الْخَبِيْثَ بَعْضَهٗ عَلٰى بَعْضٍ فَيَرْكُمَهٗ جَمِيْعًا فَيَجْعَلَهٗ فِيْ جَهَنَّمَ اُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْخٰسِرُوْنَ ﴿٣٧﴾ ع

SECTION 5

(24) Verse 38 offers the noblest vision of Divine disposition

to forgive the weaknesses of men if only they seek pardon by making amends. Incidentally it is a noble vision also of the peaceful character of the Prophet's mission and his magnanimity. So noble was the attitude displayed by the Prophet against those who had opposed his mission!

It must, therefore, have been an extremely impossible situation created for him that at a certain stage in the course of his mission, he had to take up arms to defend himself against the onslaughts of his enemies.

(25) In the beginning of the chapter it had been pointed out that the spoils of war should go not to any individual but to the State or to the community as a whole. Verse 41 details the manner of distribution of these spoils. A portion of the spoils was declared assignable to God and the Prophet (meaning thereby the Head of the State namely the Prophet and he who would succeed him in office as Head of the State), and those who were charged with the task of utilising the resources for the good of the community.

(26) This verse and the other connected verses suggest that the State should primarily care for the uplift of the economically depressed or the needy. It was decreed that a certain portion of the State exchequer should be earmarked for this special purpose.

[38] (O Prophet!) Say to the unbelievers that if they should desist, that which is past will be forgiven them, and that if they should return to fighting what had befallen those who had so behaved in the past (will befall them).

قُلْ لِّلَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْٓا اِنْ يَّنْتَهُوْا يُغْفَرْ لَهُمْ مَّا قَدْ سَلَفَ ۚ وَاِنْ يَّعُوْدُوْا فَقَدْ مَضَتْ سُنَّتُ الْاَوَّلِيْنَ ﴿٣٨﴾

[39] (O Muslims!) you have no other alternative except to fight till persecution ceases and the way of life is pursued in absolute devotion to God. But if they give up (fighting), God will take note of what they do thereafter.

وَقَاتِلُوْهُمْ حَتّٰى لَا تَكُوْنَ فِتْنَةٌ وَّيَكُوْنَ الدِّيْنُ كُلُّهٗ لِلّٰهِ ۚ فَاِنِ انْتَهَوْا فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ بِمَا يَعْمَلُوْنَ بَصِيْرٌ ﴿٣٩﴾

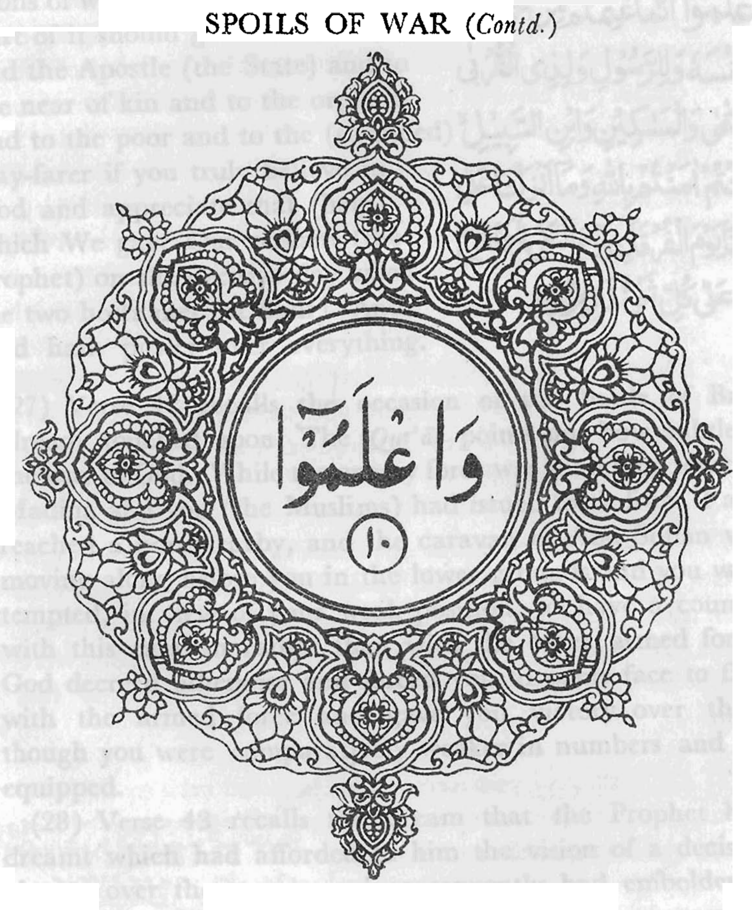
[40] But if they do not respond (to this call for peace, then do not lose heart): rest assured that God will protect you; excellent Protector indeed is He and excellent Helper.

وَإِن تَوَلَّوْا فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ مَوْلَاكُمْ ۚ نِعْمَ الْمَوْلَىٰ وَنِعْمَ النَّصِيرُ ﴿٤٠﴾

PART X

Chapter VIII

SPOILS OF WAR (*Contd.*)



CHAPTER VIII

SPOILS OF WAR (*Contd.*)

الانفال ٨ واعلموا ١٠

[41] And know ye that whatever spoils of war ye obtain, a fifth part of it should go to God and the Apostle (the State) and to the near of kin and to the orphans, and to the poor and to the (stranded) way-farer if you truly believe in God and appreciate that (help) which We gave Our servant (the Prophet) on the decisive day when the two hosts met (at Badr). And God hath power over everything.

الجزء العاشر

واعلموا انما غنمتم من شيء فان
لله خمسه وللرسول ولذي القربى
واليتمى والمسكين وابن السبيل
ان كنتم امنتم بالله وما انزلنا على
عبدنا يوم الفرقان يوم التقى الجمعن
... كل شيء قدير ⑪

(27) Verse 42 recalls the occasion of the battle of Bard already touched upon. The *Qur'ān* points out how subtle is the way of God. While the enemy force was marching towards Madina and you (the Muslims) had issued forth from it and reached a port nearby, and the caravan of Abu Sufian was moving along before you in the lower grounds and you were tempted, in view of your weak position, to have a counter with this caravan rather than with the other armed force. God decreed otherwise and forced you to come face to face with the armed force and gave you victory over them though you were comparatively weaker in numbers and ill-equipped.

(28) Verse 43 recalls the dream that the Prophet had dreamt which had afforded to him the vision of a decisive victory over the enemy and consequently had emboldened the Muslim fighters to march forward with confidence to meet the enemy.

(29) Verse 45 to 47 draw attention to the factors which contribute to success in the struggle of life.

(a) Be steadfast in your aim or purpose. This is a primary condition of success on the battlefield.

(b) Lay implicit trust in God, and turn to Him every moment for help and guidance. This will strengthen your mind and produce its strengthening effect on your physical vitality.

(c) Be always deferential towards the commands of God and His Prophet and of those vested with authority on their behalf; for without developing the sense of discipline, no band of people can achieve collective progress in life.

(d) Beware of internal dissensions among you; these will land you into endless troubles and disrupt your society.

(e) Face boldly the trials which befall you and never relax your efforts to meet them with confidence. Success always comes to them who endure the ordeal with courage.

(f) Do not imitate those who arrogantly discard the path of truth; on the other hand you should display sincerity and devotion to truth in whatever task that you undertake to discharge.

(30) The mention of Satan in Verse 48 refers to a notorious Meccan of the Prophet's time, Sarqa bin Malik bin Ja'sh, who was an associate of the Prophet's opponents but who in an hour of crisis had deserted them; so much so that the Meccans were inclined to attribute their defeat to the behaviour of this person.

[42] On that day you were encamped on the near side of the valley and the enemy on the further side and the caravan was further down your encampment (close to the sea shore).

Had you ever agreed (among yourselves) to decide upon an engagement with the enemy, you would have failed to

إِذْ أَنتُم بِالْعُدْوَةِ الدُّنْيَا وَهُم بِالْعُدْوَةِ الْقُصْوَىٰ وَالرَّكْبُ أَسْفَلَ مِنكُمْ ۚ وَلَوْ تَوَاعَدتُّمْ لَاخْتَلَفْتُمْ فِي الْمِيعَادِ ۙ وَلَٰكِن لِّيَقْضِيَ اللَّهُ أَمْرًا كَانَ مَفْعُولًا

proceed with your decision (for fear of facing a stronger force). But God led you into action notwithstanding, that He might accomplish the thing decreed by Him to be done. (Such was the decree of God that it had become so manifest to everyone at the moment) that he who was perishing realised that God was not on their side and he who was winning, that God was on their side.

لِّيَهْلِكَ مَنْ هَلَكَ عَنْ بَيِّنَةٍ وَّيَحْيٰى
مَنْ حَيَّ عَنْ بَيِّنَةٍ ۗ وَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَسَمِيْعٌ
عَلِيْمٌ ﴿٤٢﴾

[43] Remember the dream that thou had when God showed the enemy to thee as but few in number. Had He shown them to be numerous, (ye O Muslims) would certainly have become faint-hearted and would certainly have disputed among yourselves whether or not you should give battle. But from this embarrassment God saved you. He is fully aware of what troubleth (your) hearts.

اِذْ يُرِيْكَهُمُ اللّٰهُ فِيْ مَنَامِكَ
قَلِيْلًا ۭ وَلَوْ اَرٰىكَهُمْ كَثِيْرًا
لَّفَشِلْتُمْ وَلَتَنَازَعْتُمْ
فِي الْاَمْرِ وَلٰكِنَّ اللّٰهَ سَلَّمَ ۭ
اِنَّهٗ عَلِيْمٌۢ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُوْرِ ﴿٤٣﴾

[44] (O Believers!) when you confronted the enemy, He made them to appear to your eyes as few and made you appear in their eyes as few, that God might carry out what was to be done. And to God is everything eventually referred.

وَاِذْ يُرِيْكُمُوْهُمْ اِذِ الْتَقَيْتُمْ
فِيْٓ اَعْيُنِكُمْ قَلِيْلًا وَّيُقَلِّلُكُمْ فِيْٓ
اَعْيُنِهِمْ لِيَقْضِيَ اللّٰهُ اَمْرًا كَانَ
ع مَفْعُوْلًا ۭ وَاِلَى اللّٰهِ تُرْجَعُ الْاُمُوْرُ ﴿٤٤﴾

SECTION

[45] O ye who believe! when you confront any force of the enemy, stand firm and remember God intently that it may fare well with you:

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْٓا اِذَا لَقِيْتُمْ فِئَةً
فَاثْبُتُوْا وَاذْكُرُوا اللّٰهَ كَثِيْرًا
لَّعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُوْنَ ﴿٤٥﴾

[46] And obey God and His Apostle and do not quarrel among yourselves lest you become faint-hearted and your strength fail you. So, endure (the trial with

وَاَطِيْعُوا اللّٰهَ وَرَسُوْلَهٗ وَلَا تَنَازَ
عُوْا فَتَفْشَلُوْا وَتَذْهَبَ رِيْحُكُمْ وَاصْبِرُوْا

steadfastness), for God is with those who endure steadfastly.

إِنَّ اللّٰهَ مَعَ الصّٰبِرِيْنَ ۝٤٦

[47] And be not like those who came out of their houses to exhibit their insolence before men and to turn them from the way of God. But do not forget that God hath a hold over their actions.

وَلَا تَكُوْنُوْا كَالَّذِيْنَ خَرَجُوْا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ
بَطَرًا وَّرِئَآءَ النَّاسِ وَيَصُدُّوْنَ عَنْ
سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ بِمَا يَعْمَلُوْنَ مُحِيْطٌ ۝٤٧

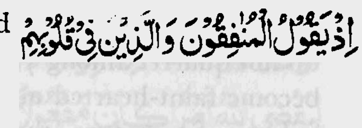
[48] And when Satan made their actions seem fair to them, he said (to them): "No man shall conquer you this day, and I shall surely be your protector." But when the two armies stood face to face, he turning on his heels said: "I am clear of you. I see what you see not; I fear God; and God is severe in chastising (those who do wrong)."

وَاِذْ زَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطٰنُ اَعْمَالَهُمْ وَ
قَالَ لَا غَالِبَ لَكُمُ الْيَوْمَ مِنَ النَّاسِ
وَاِنِّىْ جَارٌ لَّكُمْ ۚ فَلَمَّا تَرَاۗءَتِ الْفِئَتٰنِ
نَكَصَ عَلٰي عَقِبَيْهِ وَقَالَ اِنِّىْ
بَرِيْۗءٌ مِّنْكُمْ اِنِّىْٓ اَرٰى مَا لَا تَرَوْنَ اِنِّىْٓ اَخَافُ اللّٰهَ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ شَدِيْدُ الْعِقَابِ ۝٤٨

(31) When the small band of Muslims had issued forth to give battle to the stronger force of the enemy, the hypocrites in the Muslim camp and the timid could not account what seemed to them a folly on the part of those who were marching out except as a mad expression of their enthusiasm for their religion. This was undoubtedly a taunt, but in a sense the taunt was not unjustified. It was obviously a rash venture, but that rashness represented a mighty emotional attachment to truth in the pursuit of which they were prepared to sacrifice their lives. Verse 49 admits the force of the taunt, of the detractors, but meets its challenge by striking a high moral note by observing: "Indeed, whoso placeth his trust in God, (he is bound to succeed); for God verily is Mighty, Wise."

SECTION 7

[49] The hypocrites and the deceased of heart said: "Their religion hath thrown them into a delusion." (It is this delusion that hath emboldened them to



action; else what strength have they in themselves; they do not realise that the Muslims always lay their trust in God). Indeed whoso placeth his trust in God, (he is bound to succeed) for, God verily is Mighty, Wise.

مَّرَضٌ غَرَّ هٰٓؤُلَآءِ دِينُهُمْ ۗ وَمَن يَتَوَكَّلْ
عَلَى اللّٰهِ فَإِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٤٩﴾

[50] Wilt thou mark what the angels do when they cause the unbelievers to die. They smite their faces and their backs, (saying), "Taste ye the chastisement of fire.

[51] This, for what your own hands have sent before you. And God is not unjust to His servants."

[52] This was what was meted out even to the people of Pharaoh and of those before them who believed not in the revelations of God. Therefore, God laid hold of them for their sins. God is Mighty, Severe in chastisement.

وَلَوْ تَرٰىٓ إِذْ يَتَوَفَّى الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا الْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ
يَضْرِبُونَ وُجُوهَهُمْ وَأَدْبَارَ
هُمْ وَذُوقُوا عَذَابَ الْحَرِيقِ ﴿٥٠﴾
ذٰلِكَ بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَ
أَنَّ اللّٰهَ لَيْسَ بِظَلَّامٍ لِّلْعَبِيدِ ﴿٥١﴾
كَدَأْبِ اٰلِ فِرْعَوْنَ ۙ وَالَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ ۚ
كَفَرُوا بِاٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ فَأَخَذَهُمُ اللّٰهُ بِذُنُوبِهِمْ ۗ
إِنَّ اللّٰهَ قَوِيٌّ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ﴿٥٢﴾

(32) In Verse 53 and several others of the same nature, the *Qur'ān* hath made it clear what the factors are which bring about the rise or fall of nations or societies. It states that it is the way of God never to alter the condition of a people unless they alter it themselves. The annals of man endorse the truth of this statement. Every community is allowed the freedom to raise for itself a cradle of comfort on its own initiative, and also an equal freedom to dig its own grave by its own hands.

[53] This, because God never alters the favour conferred on any people, so long as they do not alter what is in their hearts. And God Heareth, Knoweth.

[54] This was what was meted out to the people of Pharaoh and of those before them who denied the truth of the reve-

ذٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللّٰهَ لَمْ يَكُ مُغَيِّرًا نِّعْمَةً
أَنْعَمَهَا عَلٰى قَوْمٍ حَتّٰى يُغَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنفُسِهِمْ ۙ
وَأَنَّ اللّٰهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٥٣﴾
كَدَأْبِ اٰلِ فِرْعَوْنَ ۙ وَالَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ ۚ

lations of their Lord. We, therefore, destroyed them in their sins and We drowned the people of Pharaoh, for, they were all evil-doers.

كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ فَأَهْلَكْنَاهُم بِذُنُوبِهِمْ وَأَغْرَقْنَا آلَ فِرْعَوْنَ وَكُلٌّ كَانُوا ظَالِمِينَ ﴿٥٤﴾

(33) It has been pointed out in Verse 22 of this chapter that those who were prone to discard reason in their day-to-day activity were worst than the vilest of beasts. The same idea is repeated here in Verse 55. It is this deliberate disregard for reason leading man very often to a wilful denial of the truths of Divine revelation that is styled 'Kufr' in the Quranic phraseology. Such an attitude on the part of any human being brings him down to a sub-human state of life. 'Kufr' is but an aspect of this low state. So the path of reason is regarded as the path of the true faith as opposed to 'Kufr' which is a denial of faith. So the one is the path of reason and insight, while the other is one of unreason and blindness.

(34) Verse 56 refers to the Jews resident in Madina at the time of the Prophet. When the Prophet migrated to Madina he found the Jews settled down in three different localities of the city—Beni Qainuqa, Beni Nuzair, Beni Quraiza. The Prophet entered into a covenant with them to live in peace together and co-operate with one another for their mutual good. One of the basic conditions of the covenant was that the Muslim followers of the Prophet and the Jewish tribes would all live together as but a single community and that if any one of them be attacked by an outside enemy every section of the federal community would help the affected section (Ibn Hisham). But very soon after the agreement was signed the Jews chose to violate it by secretly joining hands with the enemies of the Prophet, namely the Quraish of Mecca, and scheming to bring about the ruin of the faithful. In fact, plans were laid to assassinate the Prophet. Naturally, therefore, the caution was given to the Prophet through a revelation that it was advisable for him to be careful in his dealings with the Jews of Madina. The details are given in Verse 56 to the effect that should the Prophet feel that the Jews were preparing

themselves for an attack on his followers, he should inform them in advance that the covenant with them would cease to be operative if they took to action, and that if notwithstanding this announcement the Jews should choose to attack him, he was free to meet their attack and deal a deserving blow to them as well as to those Meccans who were backing them. Such was the standard of behaviour which the Prophet observed in dealing with those who were determined to wage war against him. The principle which always governed his movements in war was to give every opportunity to the enemy in advance to turn away from the wrong path before it was too late—a principle rarely observed by the so-called civilised communities of the present day even as demonstrated openly during the present world war (The Second World War).

[55] They truly are like the worst of beasts in the sight of God who have denied the truth. They are those who never will believe.

إِنَّ شَرَّ الدَّوَابِّ عِندَ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾

[56] They with whom thou hast made a compact, have repeatedly broken their compact and fear not God.

الَّذِينَ عَاهَدتَّ مِنْهُمْ ثُمَّ يَنقُضُونَ عَهْدَهُمْ فِي كُلِّ مَرَّةٍ وَهُمْ لَا يَتَّقُونَ ﴿٥٦﴾

[57] If thou comest upon them in war, scatter them so forcibly that by the example of their plight, those who back them (secretly) might take to their heels, and take a warning (for the future).

فَإِمَّا تَثْقَفَنَّهُمْ فِي الْحَرْبِ فَشَرِّدْ بِهِم مَّنْ خَلْفَهُمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَذَّكَّرُونَ ﴿٥٧﴾

[58] And if thou fear treachery from any people with whom thou hath entered into a compact, terminate the compact in advance so that each of the two parties mav feel free to act as each liked. Truly God doth not like the treacherous.

وَإِمَّا تَخَافَنَّ مِن قَوْمٍ خِيَانَةً فَانبِذْ إِلَيْهِمْ عَلَىٰ سَوَاءٍ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْخَائِنِينَ ﴿٥٨﴾

SECTION 8

(35) Verse 60 calls upon the Prophet to gather together whatever equipment he can under the circumstances by way of providing himself against the possible attacks of the enemy and thus be ready for every eventuality. This caution is given that he might not be taken unawares by his enemy.

(36) Since, however, such a preparedness in advance was not possible without the provision of the requisite funds for the purchase of equipment, the *Qur'ān* calls upon every well-to-do follower of the Prophet to assign out of his income whatever he could spare towards war preparations.

Should the Muslims of the present day realise properly the full import of this principle of assigning one's surplus wealth for the good of the State or the entire community, a great revolution will be wrought in their life assuring for them an abiding economic security both individually and collectively.

(37) Verses 61 and 62 offer in clear terms the conditions of peace. The conditions were announced at a time when victory for the Muslims was in sight consequent upon the collapse of the Meccans on the field of Badr, and all the tribes in the Arabian peninsula had come to realise that it was not easy to defeat the Prophet. Still, the order was issued to the followers of the Prophet that they should incline to peace if the enemy was inclined towards it. The intentions of the enemy in seeking peace might be evil in nature. Still, the Muslims should incline to peace if the enemy feels inclined to it.

(38) There is no task heavier for man than the endeavour to bind the hearts of men divided among themselves and to weld them into a single community bound to each other by the bonds of love towards each other. The task becomes well-nigh impossible when the aim is to bring together people who were engaged in internal fueds for generations together and consequently had no occasion to develop the sense of regard and consideration for each other.

The Prophet of Islam was raised among a people such as these. It is to be recorded to his great credit that within the brief span of 10 years he could gather around him at Madina a band of earnest people who from the way of life that they had adopted and their behaviour towards each other appeared to be a people absolutely different from those who had inhabited the Arab land for ages and from whom they were drawn. So long as the members of this band were ignorant of the beauties of the faith of Islam, they were fighting against each other. But once they accepted that faith, they suddenly presented the spectacle of a people so devoted to each other among themselves that they were prepared to sacrifice their all for the good of the community as a whole. Verse 63 points to the great change wrought in them as the result of the process of reformation which they went through under the inspiring guidance of the Prophet. The change emphasises that the rise of mutual regard and affection in the breasts of any people is a gift from God, and he who respects it prospers in life. It is a great pity that the Muslims of the present-day lack this spirit of mutual regard and affection. They were torn among themselves, subject to mutual jealousies and rivalry and consequent disunity.

(39) Verses 65 and 66 refer to two different states of mind. Faith in God, if earnestly held, should enable a band of people to over-awe others ten times in number who have denied to themselves this strength of faith. The verses suggest that the followers of the Prophet had not yet developed in them such a strength of faith to the fullest extent. Still, to the extent that they had developed it, they should be in a position to over-awe at least twice their number of those who are opposed to them at the hour.

(40) Verse 65 points out that the enemies of the Prophet were a thoughtless people. They were so deeply obsessed by the hatred of the Prophet and of his following that they had lost the talent to think aright and see for themselves what was good for them. So overwrought were they by their own wild passions that they could not, despite their huge numbers,

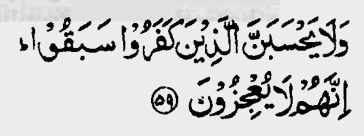
stand against the onslaught of the believers, firm in faith, though few in number.

(41) In the battle of Badr, a number of prisoners had been taken from the enemy side. Since at the time the Muslims were not in a position to meet the cost of their maintenance, the opinion was generally held among the followers of the Prophet to release them on ransom. A few among the companions of the Prophet were of the view that they should be put to death, and Omar (the future Khalif of Islam) was one of them. But the Prophet accepted the opinion of the majority and decided upon releasing the prisoners on payment of ransom.

It was at this moment that Verse 67 of this chapter was delivered. It was announced to the Prophet that prophets were not raised among mankind just to make prisoners of the enemy and keep them in prison only to obtain a ransom from them. The verse declares that the main object of their mission was to bring people to the path of truth. So, it was not proper for a Prophet to keep the unbelievers in prison indefinitely until the mission fully triumphed in the land. The reward of the believers was not simply the good things of this life. On the other hand, God prefers for them the abiding good of the hereafter.

So, Verse 70 clarifies the point at issue. It calls upon the Prophet to tell the prisoners who had not been released for their inability to afford ransom that should they develop the sense of goodness in them, God would grant them something greater in value than what they have lost and that He would forgive them. In fact, in Verse 4 of the chapter entitled 'Muhammed' the issue is finally settled. The directive is that the prisoners should be set free as an act of amnesty or for ransom if offered.

[59] And let not the disbelievers fancy that they shall escape us. Surely they can never weaken the sponsors of uth.



[60] Keep ready then against them what force you can muster together with strong squadrons whereby ye may strike terror into the enemy of God and your enemy and also into those beside them whom you do not know but whom God knoweth. Whatever you might expend in the cause of God shall certainly be repaid you; and ye shall not be denied your due.

وَأَعِدُّوا لَهُم مَّا اسْتَطَعْتُم مِّن قُوَّةٍ
وَمِن رِّبَاطِ الْخَيْلِ تُرْهِبُونَ بِهِ عَدُوَّ
اللَّهِ وَعَدُوَّكُمْ وَآخَرِينَ مِن دُونِهِمْ لَا
تَعْلَمُونَهُمُ اللَّهُ يَعْلَمُهُمْ ۚ وَمَا تُنفِقُوا
مِن شَيْءٍ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ يُوَفَّ إِلَيْكُمْ وَ
أَنتُمْ لَا تُظْلَمُونَ ﴿٦٠﴾

[61] And if they lean to peace, lean thou also to it and repose thy trust in God, for, He is the Hearing and the Knowing.

وَإِن جَنَحُوا لِلسَّلْمِ فَاجْنَحْ لَهَا وَتَوَكَّلْ
عَلَى اللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿٦١﴾

[62] But if they seek to dupe thee, (do not feel worried), God is All-sufficient for thee. He it is who hath strengthened thee with His help and with the help the faithful could offer.

وَإِن يُرِيدُوا أَن يَخْدَعُوكَ فَإِنَّ حَسْبَكَ
اللَّهُ ۚ هُوَ الَّذِي أَيَّدَكَ بِنَصْرِهِ وَبِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٦٢﴾

[63] And instil in the hearts of the faithful the feeling of oneness among them. Hadst thou spent all the riches of the earth thou could not have united their hearts, but God hath bound their hearts in affection, for, He is Mighty, Wise.

وَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِهِمْ ۚ لَوْ أَنفَقْتَ مَا فِي
الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا مَّا أَلَّفْتَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِهِمْ
وَلَٰكِنَّ اللَّهَ أَلَّفَ بَيْنَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّهُ عَزِيزٌ
حَكِيمٌ ﴿٦٣﴾

[64] O Prophet! God will be All-sufficient for thee as well as for those of the faithful who stand by thee.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ حَسْبُكَ اللَّهُ وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَكَ
مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٦٤﴾

SECTION 9

[65] O Prophet, exhort the believers to fight. (O ye believers!) Rest assured that twenty of you who shall stand firm, shall vanquish two hundred of the enemy: and if there be a hundred of you,

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ حَرِّضِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَى
الْقِتَالِ ۚ إِن يَكُن مِّنكُمْ عِشْرُونَ صَابِرُونَ
يَغْلِبُوا مِائَتَيْنِ ۚ وَإِن يَكُن مِّنكُم مِّائَةٌ

they shall vanquish a thousand, for, they are a people who have not the sense (to believe in God).

يغلبوا الفا من الذين كفروا بانهم
قوم لا يفقهون ﴿٦٥﴾

[66] (O Muslims!) God hath made your work easy, for, He knoweth how weak you are in numbers. (But you should not get disheartened.) If there be one hundred of you who stand resolutely by their faith, they shall vanquish double that number, and if there be a thousand of you, they shall vanquish two thousand by God's leave; for, God is with those who endure resolutely.

الئن خفف الله عنكم وعلم ان فيكم
ضعفا فان يكن منكم مائة صابرة
يغلبوا مائتين وان يكن منكم
الف يغلبوا الفين باذن الله والله
مع الصبرين ﴿٦٦﴾

[67] It is not meet for a prophet to hold captives under him until he has established his hold on the land. You yearn for the ephemerals of this world whereas God desireth for you the rewards of the Hereafter. And God is Mighty, Wise.

ما كان لنبي ان يكون له اسرى
حتى يثخن في الارض تريدون عرض
الدنيا والله يريد الاخرة والله
عزيز حكيم ﴿٦٧﴾

[68] Had it not been so decreed by God in advance, a severe chastisement would have befallen you for what you had taken.

لولا كتب من الله سبق لمسكم
فيما اخذتم عذاب عظيم ﴿٦٨﴾

[69] You may, however, under the circumstances make use of whatever you have secured as something lawful and good to you and be mindful of God. God is Gracious, Merciful.

فكلوا مما غنمتم
حللا طيبا واتقوا الله ان
الله غفور رحيم ﴿٦٩﴾

SECTION 10

[70] O Prophet! Say to the captives whom you hold: "If God should find in your heart anything good, he will give you something better than anything that has been taken away from you, and will

يايها النبي قل لمن في ايديكم
من الاسرى ان يعلم الله في
قلوبكم خيرا يؤتكم خيرا مما

forgive you; for God is a great Forgiver, full of mercy."

أخذ منكم ويغفر لكم والله غفور
رحيم ﴿٧٠﴾

[71] But if they seek to be treacherous towards you—(do not be severe on them) they have indeed already been treacherous to God himself; and it is why He has given you power over them. God is Knowing, Wise.

وإن يريدوا خيانتك فقد خانوا
الله من قبل فأمكن منهم
والله عليم حكيم ﴿٧١﴾

[72] Verily, they who have believed and fled their homes and staked their lives and wealth in the cause of God, and also they who have given shelter and help to them—these shall be friends, the one of the other. And they who having believed have not fled their homes, they shall have no right of protection from you until they too fly their homes.

Yet if they seek aid from you in the name of their faith, it will be obligatory on you to give them aid except against the people between whom and yourselves there is already a treaty. And remember that God beholdeth your actions.

إن الذين آمنوا وهاجروا وجاهدوا
بأموالهم وأنفسهم في سبيل الله
والذين آووا ونصروا أولئك بعضهم
أولياء بعض والذين آمنوا ولم يهاجروا
ما لكم من ولايتهم من شيء حتى يهاجروا وإن
استنصروكم في الدين فعليكم النصر إلا
على قوم بينكم وبينهم ميثاق
والله بما تعملون بصير ﴿٧٢﴾

(42) The matter of Verses 72-75 may be stated as follows:

(*a*) The mission of Islam had inspired among the people of Arabia during the time of the Prophet the spirit of affection and brotherliness among them to such an extent that they came to form together what is termed in Arabia "Mua 'kha" or a brotherhood in which one Muslim treated another as his own brother, so much so that one regarded the other as a co-sharer in what one possessed or inherited. Indeed, the relationship thus established was so highly valued that on the death of one the other was allowed the privilege to succeed him as his heir.

Such a development occurred twice—once at Mecca and once at Madina. The fraternity formed at Madina is stated

to have consisted of 90 according to one historian and of 100 according to another.

(*b*) From among the early followers of the Prophet, a majority of them had migrated to Madina. A few had to stay away at Mecca under the pressure of their circumstances.

(*c*) The *Qur'ān* styles all those who had left their homes, to whatever tribes they severally belonged, as members of a single brotherhood, a brotherhood of those who were devoted to truth, everyone helping each other in their new surroundings and sharing the prosperity which attended their united life.

(*d*) But they who had embraced Islam but were unable to migrate to Madina could not naturally share this prosperity.

(*e*) But it was incumbent on those who had migrated that they should render every help, in matters religious, to those who were left behind, in ways open to them.

(*f*) It should be borne in mind, however, that the primary duty of a Muslim is to respect the promises made to others or any agreement entered into with them. So if the Muslims of Madina had already entered into a covenant with any group of non-Muslims, it would not be permissible for them at any time to go against them or break the covenant entered into for the sake of any Muslims who might invoke their aid against the non-Muslims concerned.

It might be pointed out here that the Prophet had entered into an agreement with several groups of non-Muslims living in and around Madina. Several of those groups had broken the agreement. But a formal notice of it had not yet been taken by the Prophet. Till the agreement was cancelled, it had necessarily to be respected. One could easily estimate the sanctity attached by the Muslims of the days of the Prophet to pledges given.

(*g*) The *Qur'ān* states that any group of Muslims other than the two groups referred to above could not rank as high with them. The first of the two groups consisted of those early followers of the Prophet who in the cause of his mission had to forsake their homes at Mecca and had to risk their lives and all

that they had in its cause and had to follow the Prophet into exile. The members of this group are styled "the Muhajirin" or those who had migrated with the Prophet. The other group was composed of those Madinites who had welcomed the Prophet to their city and helped his cause. They are called "Ansars" or helpers. These two groups are hailed by the *Qur'ān* as "Indeed true Muslims". (Verse 4 of this chapter.) In another place, the *Qur'ān* refers to these two groups of the Prophet's followers as "those who take precedence over others by virtue of their being the very first of those who embraced Islam." It is these two groups who are mentioned in two of the verses of Chapter 59.

Verse 8 refers to the first group, viz. the Muhajirin as "poor refugees who had been driven from their homes with all their wealth left behind and who sought the grace and pleasure of God and aid God and His Apostle".

The verse adds that they are indeed men of truth.

The next verse refers to the groups of Ansars or those Madinites "who were the first to embrace Islam and who cherished those who took refuge with them and found not in their breasts any desire for what hath fallen out of the spoils of war to the share of the Muhajirins who they preferred before themselves though they had been reduced to poverty". These two groups are again referred to in the *Qur'ān* (Chapter 56, Verses 10-12) as "The foremost, indeed the foremost, who shall be brought nigh to God."

It is obvious that in the pursuit of truth, the status that should be assigned to those who join the movement after them cannot be the same.

(*h*) The *Qur'ān* states that those who embraced Islam after the migration of the Prophet to Madina and left their homes for the sake of God would hold a rank next to the two groups of Muslims referred to under (*g*). But they would, nevertheless, enjoy all the benefits open to the Muslim brotherhood.

(*i*) The chapter closes with a reference to the question of inheritance. The enthusiasm among the followers of the faith had grown so high in the time of the Prophet that every one

looked upon every other as a veritable brother of his and was prepared, to treat him as a co-sharer in his inheritance. The followers of the faith had welded themselves into an integrated brotherhood, every one bound to the other by the abiding ties of a common ideology. It was the love of God and His prophet that had inspired them to sacrifice everything that they possessed and indeed their very lives in the way of God.

It is however pointed out by the *Qur'ān* that the intensity of affection which subsisted between one and another in this brotherhood of Islam should not come in the way of the law of inheritance applicable to the members of the family or to blood-relations.

(*j*) Verse 73 while referring to the caution advanced in the preceding verse in respect of inheritance, states that, should the law in regard to it be set aside out of their enthusiastic affection for each other, the stability and integrity of society will be disturbed and that was an eventuality which needed to be avoided in the interest of the society itself and of the brotherhood of Islam.

What is of primary importance in any society is the development or maintenance of sincere fraternal regard for each other. The people who had offered resistance to the mission of the Prophet and had preferred the path of error were one in their aim to thwart the path of truth. It being so, it was doubly imperative on the part of those who professed to uphold the cause of truth that they should live and work together as a solid unit.

Such was the high sense of Unity which the first generation of Muslims had displayed in their united devotion to the cause of truth. Now that their number has increased to four hundred million in the world of today, do we find in them any urge for unity; do we find this urge at least among the Muslims of India (undivided India) who number but a 100 million?

[73] The unbelievers lend one another mutual help. Unless you do the same among yourselves, persecution will

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ ۚ إِلَّا

prevail in the land, and great mischief done to you.

تَفْعَلُوهُ تَكُن فِتْنَةٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَفَسَادٌ كَبِيرٌ ﴿٧٣﴾

[74] They who have believed and fled their country and struggled in the way of God, and they who have given the Prophet and his followers an asylum, and been helpful to them— these are verily the faithful. Mercy is their due and an honourable provision.

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَهَاجَرُوا وَجَاهَدُوا
فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ آوَوا وَّنَصَرُوا
أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ حَقًّا لَّهُم
مَّغْفِرَةٌ وَرِزْقٌ كَرِيمٌ ﴿٧٤﴾

[75] And they who have believed in the meantime and fled their homes and have joined you to fight by your side, these also are of you. Those who are united by ties of blood according to the book of God, enjoy closer relationship with one another. Verily God knoweth all things.

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِن بَعْدُ وَهَاجَرُوا
وَجَاهَدُوا مَعَكُمْ فَأُولَٰئِكَ مِنكُمْ
وَأُولُو الْأَرْحَامِ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلَىٰ بِبَعْضٍ
فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٧٥﴾